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FROM

May, 1864

THE

# **IDLE MAN.**

By  
*Richard A. Dana.*

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How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle. *Cooper.*

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NEW-YORK:

WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.

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W. Grattan, Printer.

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1821.



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*Southern District of New-York, ss.*

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**The Idle Man.**

How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle. *Cowper.*

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**G. L. THOMPSON,**  
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

## PREFACE.

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HAVING perplexed myself for two or three hours, with trying in vain to fix upon a title for my book, I had taken an early cup of tea, by way of restorative, and was sitting in the twilight over a sleepy fire, having made up my mind not to quit my seat till I had called it something.

“What are you thinking upon so intently that you do not turn to look at one?” said a friend of mine as he entered. “I wish,” said I, without raising my head, “that you had taken to-morrow to ask that question; for I was never more at a fault with a conundrum or a chinese puzzle, than I am at this moment to fix upon a title, and there is not a pert Miss of ten but could always leave me behind at either of those plays.”—“What—that not settled yet?” asked my friend. “No, I have been under as much concern about what to call the offspring of my brain, as was old Mr. Shandy in fixing upon a name for his child, when he came at last. Pray Heaven there

be no blunder in my case, too, after all. Yet I fear it mainly. I wish the brat had never been born. You see what a little thing it is," said I, taking up a small bundle of manuscript that lay by me; "and you know it is all the same with men and books. If they are not clever and spirited in an inverse ratio to their size, they will meet with little else but abuse in the world; so that it would have been better for them had they never come into it."

"Don't be down hearted man about a trifle. Why there are very good names, and a plenty of them too, ready made to your hand; 'Spectator,' 'Looker-on,' 'Observer,' 'Citizen of the World,' and a score more of very excellent names. What would your nicety have better?" "An arch lad you must take me for," said I, looking him full in the eye, "to think that I would be at the pains of reminding folks of such writers, all the while they were reading me."—"There is something in that. How long is it since you sent yourself to school to learn worldly wisdom? There is another objection, should there be nothing in yours," he added with a grave face, "and which now occurs to me. Posterity might be puzzled how to make a distinction, when

speaking of two works under the same name.”  
 “I wish,” answered I, “that, instead of exercising your wit upon me, you would put it to a better use, and help me out of my difficulty.”

“Well then, in the first place, what have you thought of?” “I hardly know what. *Speculatist* has occurred to me, amongst others.” “Is it in Johnson,” asked he.—“No, but there is authority enough for it, and I can tell the world so; and if they will not believe me, I shall have the satisfaction of putting them to the trouble of a hunt. I can go on with my own business while they are proving a negative. It will raise a dispute which will bring me into notice; and let that end as it will, it must turn to my advantage. Yet I do not like *Speculatist*. It is hard to pronounce.” “That difficulty will soon be gotten over,” said he laughingly; “for you will be so much in the mouths of men, that *Speculatist* will before long be as easy of pronunciation as any other word. But why not take *Speculator*?” “That has been so long used in a peculiar sense, that the old Georgia Claimants, the Western Land Purchasers, and the United States Bank Speculators, besides thousands of turnpike and bridge owners, might be led into a mistake; and having

paid down their money, and finding that my work was a good for nothing thing, having to do with neither land nor water, here nor in the moon, would vow it was a complete take in; and I, who, when a boy, bargained away a large ball of seine twine, just bought to fly my kite with, for a wretched daub in yellow and green, and have gone from that time to this, by the name of 'Moses of the green Spectacles,' should pass henceforth in the world for a notorious sharper. My first number might sell well enough, but I should never dare venture another. No, simple as I am, I will never take upon me a name, which would harm me so, without an equivalent."

"What say you to some quaint title? Quaint titles are always taking with the world at first."  
 "To tell you the truth, I am superstitious about the influence of names—as much so as Mr. Shandy himself. And this I have observed, which confirms me in my belief—works passing under quaint names are apt to have more of conceit than wit in them, and an upstart smartness always perking itself in your face, rather than an agreeable humour which fits itself to circumstances, and comes and goes with occasions."

“ I see that you will never be suited,” said he, snatching up his hat. “ So you must leave your mighty work to be ushered into the world by your executors. Or suppose, that instead of a titlepage you make your appearance in a clean, white blank? It would be so new and so clever a conceit, there is no telling but that it would help you more than all the pages following it. I warrant ye, the world will find names enough to call you by, and soon enough too, though they may not be altogether to your liking. And so, Mr. What’s-your-name, I take my leave of you.”

“ A plague go with you,” muttered I, as he left the room. “ You have wasted my time and patience, and left me to make up for the loss of both as I may. It is no more than my due. He who is always consulting others, instead of acting for himself, deserves no better fortune.”

I had, by this time, worked myself into something like a passion, and, like most people in that state, I did in an instant what I had been hesitating about for days; and called myself **THE IDLE MAN**;—a very quiet and unpretending name for a man in a passion.

People who will not see the difficulty and embarrassment of the situation I was in, and

who hold it of little consequence what I call myself, so I do well, may say, that, like every body else who toils and worries about trifles, I have taken the very worst name, if there be any choice in names, which I could have hit upon. I am not of their opinion in the one case or the other. And, to conclude, if they are but half as well satisfied with what I write, as I am with my title, we shall be very well contented all round.

Now, that I have settled my main difficulty so much to my mind, I am at liberty to say a few words about myself, and the nature of my work. If folks will be at the pains of reading this number, it will save me the trouble of speaking about it, and I shall be so far advanced in being understood. If they will not, I may as well be silent altogether.

In the first place, I am not rich enough to write for mere amusement ; so that if not paid for what I do, I must stop. Besides, were I ever so rich, there would be no more diversion in writing what one knows the world will never read, than in playing backgammon, right hand against left. My motive to industry being so strong, there is little doubt about the work's



being continued, should it meet with encouragement.

As I have so little of the world's wealth for my thoughts and affections to fasten on, I am apt to set the more by my tastes and opinions—to urge them with warmth, and maintain them with earnestness; and sometimes to speak of those which differ from mine with a little too much heat. I trust I feel no personal hostility in this; and so long as that is not manifested towards me, I hope to bear patiently all remarks—improve by those I may think just—and go on, as I have hitherto done, in my own way, without replying to those I may consider wrong. I am not vain zealot enough to dream of bringing all to one mind; nor should I like to see this so dull a world as it would be, did all men think alike. A little error is better than no life.

I have never written dispraisingly of any man, farther than he was a public creature, nor that beyond his deserts; and hope I never shall. This I make known now, to be in favour with the world. For this is a world all of charity, hating slander, admiring what is great, without envy, and talking only of what is good in men. Yet I have sometimes found entertainment in reading

things in ridicule of another, which I would not have written of my worst enemy; and have borne the prate, the affectation, and folly of the world, with something more than a consolatory reflection at the thought of how much amusement would be lost, were we all alike wise. As something of this fault in my nature may now and then be seen lurking in what I write, I have thought it best to confess it here, and let my frankness go as far as it will in extenuation of my failing.

In such a work as I propose putting out, politics, dry discussions, and scientific articles would neither be expected nor desired. It will consist of stories, essays, now and then criticism, and poetry, when I am furnished with any that will do. I know that it is an arduous undertaking for one whose mind rarely feels the spring of bodily health bearing it up, whose frame is soon worn by mental labour, and who can seldom go to his task with that hopeful sense sustaining him which a vigorous and clear spirit gives to the soul. To know that our hour for toil is come, and that we are weak and unprepared—to feel that depression or lassitude are weighing us down, when we must feign lightness and

mirth—or to mock our secret griefs with show of others not akin, must be the fate of him who labours in such a work. This is not all. When our work is done, and well done, the excitement which employment had given us is gone—the spirits sink down, and there is a dreadful void in the mind. We feel as powerless as infancy till pushed to the exertion of our strength again. Even great success has its terrors. We fear that we shall never do so well again; and know how churlishly the world receives from us that which will not bear comparison with what we have given them before.

Yet these sufferings have their rewards. To bear up against ill health by a sudden and strong effort, to shake off low spirits, and drive away the mist which lies thick and heavy upon the mind, gives a new state of being to the soul cheerful as the light. To sit at home in our easy chair, and send our gay thoughts abroad, as it were on wings, to thousands—to imagine them laughing over the odd fancies and drolleries which had made us ~~in~~ and happy in secret, multiplies and spreads our sympathies quietly and happily through the world. In this way, too, we can pour out before the world thoughts

which had never been laid open even to a friend; and make it feel our melancholy, and bear our griefs, while we still sit in the secret of our souls. The heart tells its story abroad, yet loses not its delicacy; it lays itself bare, but is still sensitive.

Besides the difficulties which I have already mentioned as lying in the way of such a work as I hope to write, books are multiplying so fast upon us, that they seem, at first sight, to be doing little else than crowding each other out of place. Then, what with exalted and rich romantic poetry, and a new and first rate order of novels, the world is so full of "high feeding," that simple essays, as most of mine must be, will perhaps be tasteless. If I should attempt to make merry with the world, I shall be reminded of Salmagundi. And, what can I do in story, with Rip Van Winkle and Sleepy Hollow in the mind of every body? Yet this perhaps is an idle fear. There is room enough for all sorts of minds; and though one fall short of another, yet, be it good in its kind, those will be pleased with it because of the variety, who may still like another better. Nature never repeats herself; and it is because of her changes that we love her so. We would not have the same form, though ever

so beautiful, always before our eyes. The heart has one delight in the tall tree, and another in the low bush. It is lifted when we see the broad, blue sky and large moving cloud, and is touched with kindness for the field flowers that are looking up about our feet.

Should I meet with encouragement, I propose bringing my work out in numbers as near to the size of this as I conveniently can, and as frequently as the public may be glad to see me.

I am sensible that the whole rests on my own shoulders. For, in these matters, the assistance of our friends is at best but precarious; and there is still less to hope for from the help of strangers. I shall, however, be grateful for assistance from the one or the other; and their wishes shall be regarded should they desire their names kept secret.

I have put up a large porch-way to a small building; but hope it will be found comfortable and cheerful within.



## DOMESTIC LIFE.

O friendly to the best pursuits of man,  
Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,  
Domestic life.—

*Cowper.*

It is but for a short part of life that the world is a wonder and delight to us, when its events are so many causes of joy and admiration. The mist of morning soon breaks into little wreaths, and is lost in the air; and the objects which it drest in new beauties, are found to be things of our common notice. It passes off from the earth, and the fairy sea is swallowed up, and the green islands, scattered far and wide over it, are again turned into tall trees and mountain brushwood.

In early life we are for ever giving objects the hue that best pleases us, and shaping and enlarging them as suits our imagination. But the time comes when we must look upon the unsightly without changing it, and when the hardness of



reality makes us feel that there are things not to be moulded to our fancies. Men and their actions were figured to our minds in extremes. Giants and dwarfs peopled the world, and filled it with deeds of heroic virtue and desperate vice. All that we looked forward to kept our spirits alive, and our imagination found food for our desires. At one time, we were vainglorious at our victories over magnificent crimes; at another, bearing up firmly against oppression with the honest and tried.

We come at length into the world, and find men too busy about their own affairs, to make those of another their concern, and too careful of themselves, to go a tilting for another's rights. Even the bad have a mixture in their character which takes away its poetic effect, and we at last settle down in the dull conviction, that we are never to meet with entire and splendid virtue, or unmixed vice. With this sudden check upon our feelings, we may live in the world disappointed and estranged from it; or become like others, cold and wise, putting on timidity for caution, and selfishness for prudence; seeing the wrong, yet afraid to condemn it; guarded in our speech, and slow in conduct. Or, shaking ourselves loose

of this hypocrisy of life, we may let go with it the virtues it mimics, and despising the solemn ostent and formalities of society, may break through its restraints, and set its decencies at defiance. Or, too wise to be vitious, and too knowing to be moved, we may look with complacent unconcern upon the errors of the world; forbearing to shake the faith of the religious, because it has its social uses, or to point out the fallacies of moral codes, because they serve the same end.

The virtuous tendencies of our youth might in this way run to vice, and our early feelings grow cold, were there not in us affections of a quieter nature, resting on objects simple and near at hand, receiving from one being more delight than from a thousand, and kindling a light within us, making one spot a perpetual brightness, and secretly cheering us through life. These affections are our domestic attachments, which are refreshed every morning, and grow daily under a gentle and kindly warmth, making a companionship for what is lonely, leaving it all the distinctness and intenseness of our highest solitary joys. We may bring to our homes all the

hopes and expectations which shot up wild and disorderly in our young imaginations, and leaving them their savour and bright hues, may sort each with its kind, and hedge them round with the close and binding growth of family attachments. It is true, that this reality has a narrower range, and an evenner surface, than the ideal. Yet there is a rest, and an assured and virtuous gladness in it, which make an harmonious union of our feelings and fancies.

Home gives a certain serenity to the mind, so that every thing is well marked and sparkling in a clear atmosphere, and the lesser beauties are all brought out to rejoice in the pure glow which floats over and beneath them from the earth and sky. In this state of mind afflictions come to us chastened; the wrongs of the world cross us in our door-path, and we put them aside without anger. Vices are every where about us, not to lure us away, nor make us morose, but to remind us of our frailty, and keep down our pride. We are put into a right relation with the world; neither holding it in proud scorn, like the solitary man, nor are we carried along with shifting and hurried feelings, and vague and careless notions of things, like the world's man. We do not take

novelty for improvement, nor set up vogue for a rule of conduct; neither despair as if all great virtues had departed with the years gone by; though we see new vices, frailties and follies taking growth in the very light which is spreading through the earth.

Connexion with beings of our own household makes us feel our relationship to mankind under the best influences, by cherishing in us kindness towards the good, and pity for the bad, without binding us to the mistakes of the one, or vices of the other. The domestic man has an independence of thought which puts him at ease in society, and a cheerfulness and benevolence of feeling which seems to ray out from him, and to diffuse a pleasurable sense over those near him like a soft, bright day. As domestic life strengthens a man's virtue, so does it help to a sound judgment, a right balancing of things, and gives an integrity and propriety to the whole character. God, in his goodness, has ordained that virtue should make its own enjoyment, and that wherever a vice or frailty is rooted out, something should spring up to be a beauty and delight to the mind. But a man of a character so cast, has pleasures at home, which, though fitted to

his highest nature, are common to him as his daily food. He moves about his house under a continued sense of them, and is happy almost without heeding it.

Women have been called angels in love tales and sonnets, till we have almost learned to think of angels as ~~little~~ <sup>few</sup> better ~~than~~ <sup>to</sup> women. Yet a man who knows a woman thoroughly, and loves her truly—and there are women who may be both so known and loved—will find, after a few years, that his relish for the grosser pleasures has lessened, and that he has grown into a fondness for the intellectual and refined without an effort, and almost unawares. He has been led on to virtue through his pleasures. The delights of the eye, and the gentle play of that passion which is the most inward and romantic in our nature, and which keeps much of its character amidst the concerns of life, have held him in a kind of spiritualized existence. He shares his very being with one who, a creature of this world, and with something of the world's frailties, is

— yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of an angel light.  
*Wordsworth.*

With all the sincerity of a companionship of feeling, cares, sorrows, and enjoyments, her presence is as the presence of a purer being, and there is that in her nature which seems to bring him nearer to a better world. She is, as it were, linked to angels, and he feels, in his exalted moments, held by the same tie.

A woman, amidst the ordinary affairs of life, has a greater influence than a man, on those near her. While, for the most part, our feelings are as retired as anchorites, hers are in constant play before us. We hear them in her varying voice. We see them in the beautiful and harmonious undulations of her movements—in the quick-shifting hues of her face—in her eye, glad and bright—then fond and suffused. Her whole frame is alive and active with what is at her heart, and the outward form all speaks. And can a man listen to this—can his eye rest upon all this, day after day, and he not be touched and made better? She seems of a finer mould than we, and cast in a form of beauty which, like all beauty, acts with a moral influence upon our hearts. As she moves about us, we feel a movement within, which rises and spreads gently over us, harmonizing with her own.

The dignity of a woman has its peculiar character. It awes more than that of man. His is more physical, bearing itself up with an energy of courage which we may brave, or a strength which we may struggle against. He is his own avenger, and we may stand the brunt. A woman's has nothing of this force in it. It is of a higher quality, too delicate for mortal touch. We bow before it, as before some superior spirit appearing in beautiful majesty.

There is a propriety, too, in a woman's mind, a kind of instinctive judgment, which leads us along in a right way, and that so gently, and by such a continuous run of little circumstances, that we are hardly conscious we are not going on in our own course. She helps to cure our weaknesses better than man, because she sees them quicker, because we are more ready to show her those which are hid, and because advice comes from her without its air of superiority, and reproof without its harshness.

Men who feel deeply, show little of their deepest feelings to each other. But, besides the close union and common interests and concerns between husband and wife, a woman seems to be a creature peculiarly ordained for a man to



lay open his heart to, and share its joys with, and be a comforter to its griefs. Her voice soothes us like music; she is our light in gloom, and our sun in a cold world. In time of affliction she does not come to us like man, who lays by for the hour his proper nature to give us relief. She ministers to us with a hand so gentle, and speaks in a voice so calm and kind, and her very being is so much in all she does, that she seems at the moment one born only to heal our sorrows, and give rest to our cares. That man must be sadly depraved, and as hard as stone, who does not feel all disturbance within gradually sinking away, and a quietude stealing through his frame, to whom such a being is sent for comfort and support.)

(Of all the relations in life, that of parents and children is the most holy; and there are no pleasures, or cares, or thoughts, connected with this world, which carry us so soon to another. The helpless infancy of children sets our own death before us, when they will be left to a world to which we would not trust ourselves; and the thought of the character they may take in after life, brings with it the question, what awaits them in another. Though there is a melan-

choly in this, its seriousness has a religious tendency. And the responsibility which a man has laid himself under, begets a resoluteness of character—a sense that this world was not made to idle in—and a feeling of dignity that he is acting for a great end. How heavily does one toil who labours only for himself; and how is he cast down by the thought of what a worthless creature it is all for!

We have heard of the sameness of domestic life. He must have a dull head and little heart who grows weary of it. A man who moralizes feelingly, and has a proneness to see a beauty and fitness in all God's works, may find daily food for his mind even in an infant. In its innocent sleep, when it seems like some blessed thing dropped from the clouds, with tints so delicate, and with its peaceful breathing, we can hardly think of it as of mortal mould, it looks so like a pure spirit made visible for our delight.

“Heav’n lies about us in our infancy,” says Wordsworth. And who of us, that is not too good to be conscious of his own vices, who has not felt rebuked and humbled under the clear and open countenance of a child—who that has not felt his impurities foul upon him in the pre-

sence of a sinless child? These feelings make the best lesson that can be taught a man; and tell him in a way, which all else he has read or heard never could, how paltry is all the show of intellect compared with a pure and good heart. He that will humble himself and go to a child for instruction, will come away a better and a wiser man.

*Abbot*

If children can make us wiser, they surely can make us better. I do not know a being more to be envied than a goodnatured man watching the workings of children's minds, or overlooking their play. Their eagerness, curious about every thing, making out by a quick imagination what they see but a part of—their fanciful combinations and magic inventions, creating out of ordinary circumstances, and the common things which surround them, strange events and little ideal worlds, and these all working in mystery to form matured thought, is study enough for the most acute minds, and should teach us not too officiously to regulate what we so little understand. The still musing and deep abstraction in which they sometimes sit, affect us as a playful mockery of older heads. These little philosophers have no foolish system with all its pride

and jargon confusing their brains. Theirs is the natural movement of the soul, intense with new life, and busy after truth, working to some purpose, though without a noise.

When children are lying about seemingly idle and dull, we, who have become case-hardened by time and satiety, forget that they are all sensation—that their outstretched bodies are drinking in from the common sun and air—that every sound is taken note of by the ear—and that every floating shadow and passing form come and touch at the sleepy eye. The little circumstances and material world about them make their best school, and will be their instructors and the formers of their characters for life. And it is delightful to look on and see how busily the whole acts, with its countless parts fitted to each other, and moving in harmony. There are none of us who have stolen softly behind a child when labouring in a sunny corner, digging a lilliputian well, or fencing in a six-inch barn yard, to listen to his soliloquies, and dialogues with some imaginary being, without our hearts being touched. Nor have we observed the flush which crossed his face when finding himself betrayed, without seeing in it the delicacy and propriety of the after man

A man may have many vices upon him, and have walked long in a bad course, yet if he has a love of children, and can take pleasure in their talk and play, there is something still left in him for virtue to act upon—something which can still love simplicity and truth. I have seen one in whom some low vice had become a habit, make himself the plaything of a set of riotous children, with as much delight in his countenance as if nothing but goodness had ever been expressed in it; and have felt as much of kindness and sympathy towards him, as I have of revolting towards another, who has gone through life with all due propriety, with a cold and supercilious bearing towards children which makes them shrinking and still. I have known one like this last attempt, with uncouth condescension, to court an openhearted child, who would draw back with an instinctive dislike. I felt as if there were a curse upon him. Better to be driven out from amongst men, than to be hated of children.

When my heart has been full of joy and good will at the thought of the blessings of home—at the remembrance that the little which is right within me was learned there—when I have reflected upon the nature of my enjoyments abroad, and

cast them up, and found them so few, and have then turned home again, and have found that its pleasures were my best lessons of virtue, and as countless as good, I have thought that I could talk of it forever. It is not so. Though the feeling of home never wearies, because kind offices, and the thousand little ways in which home attachments are always uttering themselves, keep it fresh and full in its course; yet the feeling itself, and that which feeds it, have a simplicity and unity of character of which little is to be told, though they are always with us.

It may be thought that something should be said of the influence of domestic associations on a child, and on its filial attachments. I would not overcast the serenity I now feel by calling up the days when I was a boy—when the spirits were unbroken, and the heart pure—when the past was unheeded, and the future bright. I would not do this, to be pained with all that has gone amiss in my later days—to remember how poorly I have borne the ills of life, and how thankless has been my spirit for its good.

It is needless to talk of the afflictions of domestic life. Those which Providence sends, come for our good, and their best consolations

are found in the abode into which they enter. Of the troubles which we make to ourselves we have no right to complain. Ill-sorted marriages will hardly bring agreement; and from those of convenience will hardly come love. But when the deep and tranquil enjoyment, the light and playful cheerfulness, the exaltation of feeling, and the clear calm of thought, which belong to those who know each other entirely, and have by nature something of the romance of love in them, are all told; then will I speak of the troubles of home.



## MR. KEAN.

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They become sparing and reserved in their commendations—they envy him the satisfaction of an applause, and look on their praises rather as a kindness done to his person, than as a tribute paid to his merit.

*The Spectator.*

I HAD scarcely thought of the Theatre for several years, when Mr. Kean arrived in this country; and it was as much from curiosity as any other motive, that I went to see, for the first time, the great actor of the age. I was soon lost to all recollection of being in a theatre, or looking upon a grand display of the “mimic art.” The simplicity, earnestness, and sincerity of his acting made me forgetful of the fiction, and bore me away with the power of reality and truth. If this be acting, said I, as I returned home, I will hereafter study nature at second hand, and the theatre shall henceforward be my school to learn man in and improve myself.

How can I describe one who is nearly as ver-

satire as nature itself, and almost as full of beauties—who grows upon us the more we are acquainted with him—who makes us sensible that the first time we saw him in any part, however much he may have moved us, we had but a vague and poor apprehension of the numberless excellencies of his acting. We cease to consider it as a mere amusement. It is a great intellectual feast, and he who goes to it with a disposition and capacity to relish it, will receive from it more nourishment for his mind, than he can in any other way in four fold the time. All our faculties are opened and enlivened by it—our reflections and recollections are of an elevated kind—and his very voice, which is sounding in our ears long after we have left him, creates an inward harmony which is for our good.

Mr. Kean is in truth to other players whom we have seen, very much what Shakspeare is to other dramatists. One player is called classical; another makes fine points here, and another there. Mr. Kean makes more fine points than all of them together. But, in him, these are only little prominences, showing their bright heads above a beautifully undulated surface. A constant change is going on in him, partaking of

the nature of the varying scenes he is passing through, and the many thoughts and feelings which are shifting every moment within him. In a clear autumnal day we may see here and there a deep white cloud shining with metallic brightness against a blue sky, and now and then a dark pine swinging its top in the wind with the melancholy sound of the sea. But who can note the shifting and untiring play of the leaves of the wood, and their passing hues, when each one seems a living thing full of delight, and vain of its gaudy attire? A sound, too, of universal harmony is in our ears, and a wide spread beauty before our eyes, which we cannot define; yet a joy is in our hearts. Our delight increases in these, day after day, the longer we give ourselves to them, till we become at last, as it were, a part of the existence without us. So it is with natural characters. They grow upon us imperceptibly, till we become fast bound up in them, we scarce know when or how. So it will be with the actor who is deeply filled with nature, and is perpetually throwing off her beautiful *evanescences*. Instead of becoming tired of him, as we do, after a time, of others, he will go on, always

giving something which will be new to the observing mind; and he will keep the feelings alive, because their action will be natural. I have no doubt that, excepting those who go to a play, as children look into a show box, to admire and exclaim at distorted figures, and raw, unharmonious colours, there is no man of a moderately warm temperament, and a tolerable share of insight into human nature, who would not find his interest in Mr. Kean increasing with a study of him. It is very possible that the intense excitement might in some degree lessen, but there would be a quieter delight instead of it stealing upon us as we contemplated his perfections.

The versatility of Mr. Kean's playing is unbounded. He seems not the same being, taking upon him at one time the character of Richard, at another that of Hamlet; but the two characters appear before you as distinct individuals who had never known, nor heard of each other. So completely does he become the character he is to represent, that we have sometimes thought it a reason why he was not universally better liked in this country, in Richard; and that because the player did not make *himself* a little more visible, he must needs bear a share of our disgust and

hate towards the cruel king. And this may the more be the case, as his construction of the character, whether right or wrong, creates in us an unmixed dislike of Richard, till from anguish of mind he becomes an object of pity; from which moment to the close, Mr. Kean is allowed, on all hands, to play the part better than any one has before him.

In his highest wrought passion, when every limb and muscle are alive and quivering, and his gestures are hurried and violent, nothing appears rantèd or overacted; because he makes us feel, that with all this, there is something still within him vainly struggling for utterance. The very breaking and harshness of his voice in these parts, though upon the whole it were better otherwise, help to this impression upon us, and so make up in a good degree for the defect.

Though he is on the very verge of truth in his passionate parts, he never passes into extravagance. He runs along the dizzy edge of the roaring and beating sea, with feet as sure as we walk our parlours. We feel that he is safe, for some preternatural spirit upholds him as it hurries him onward. When all is upturn and tossing in the whirl of the passions, we see that there is a

power and order over the whole. In the utmost madness, there is a piece of sanity left in the wreck.

A man has feelings sometimes which can only be breathed out—there is no utterance for them in words. I had hardly written this, when the terrible and indistinct, “Ha!” with which Mr. Kean makes Lear hail Cornwall and Regan, as they enter, in the fourth scene of the second act, came to my mind. It seemed at the time to take me up, and sweep me along in its wild swell. No description in the world could give a very clear notion of the sound. It must be formed as well as it may be, from what has just been said of its effect.

Mr. Kean’s playing is frequently giving instances of various, inarticulate sounds—the throttled struggle of rage, and the choking of grief—the broken laugh of extreme suffering, when the mind is ready to deliver itself over to an insane joy—the utterance of over-full love, which cannot, and would not, speak in express words—and that of wildering grief, which blanks all the faculties of man.

No player before has attempted these, except now and then; and should any one have made the trial in the various ways in which Mr. Kean

gives them, no doubt he would have failed. Mr. Kean thrills us with them, as if they were wrung from him in his agony. They have no appearance of study or artifice. The truth is, that the labour of a mind of his genius constitutes its existence and delight. It is not like the toil of ordinary men at their task work. What shows effort in them, comes from him with the freedom and force of nature.

Some object to the frequent use of such sounds; and to others they are quite shocking. But those who permit themselves to consider that there are really violent passions in man's nature, and that they utter themselves a little differently from our ordinary feelings, I believe, understand and feel their language, as they speak to us in Mr. Kean. Probably no actor ever conceived passion with the intenseness and life that he does. It seems to enter into him and possess him, as evil spirits were said to possess men of old. It is curious to observe how some who have sat very contentedly year after year, and called the face-making which they have seen, expression, and the stage stride, dignity, and the noisy declamation, and all the rodomontade of acting, energy and passion, complain that Mr.

Kean is apt to be extravagant; when in truth he seems to be little more than a simple personation of the feeling or passion to be expressed at the time.

It has been so common a saying, that Lear is the most difficult of all characters to personate, that we had taken it for granted no man could play it so as to satisfy us. Perhaps it is the hardest to represent. Yet the part which we have supposed the most difficult, the insanity of Lear, is scarcely more so than the choleric old king. Inefficient rage is almost always ridiculous; and an old man, with a broken down body, and a mind falling in pieces from the violence of its uncontrolled passions, is in constant danger of exciting our contempt along with our pity. It is a chance matter which we are moved to. And this it is which makes the opening of Lear so difficult.

We may as well notice here the objection which some make to the abrupt violence with which Mr. Kean begins in Lear. If this is a fault, it is Shakspeare, and not Kean, who is to blame. For we have not the least doubt that Mr. Kean has conceived it according to his author. Perhaps, however, the mistake lies in



this case, where it does in most others—with those who put themselves into the seat of judgment to pass upon greater men.

In most instances, Shakspeare has given us the gradual growth of a passion, with all such little accompaniments as agree with it, and go to make up the whole man. In Lear, his object being to represent the beginning and course of insanity, he has properly enough gone a little back of it, and introduced us to an old man of good feelings, but who had lived without any true principle of conduct, whose ungoverned passions had grown strong with age, and were ready upon any disappointment to make shipwreck of an intellect always weak. To bring this about, he begins with an abruptness rather unusual, and the old king rushes in before us, as it were, with all his passions at their height, tearing him like fiends.

Mr. Kean gives this as soon as a fit occasion offers itself. Had he put more of melancholy and depression, and less of rage into the character, we should have been very much puzzled at his so suddenly going mad. The change must have been slower ; and, besides, his insanity must have been of another kind. It must have been

monotonous and complaining, instead of continually varying; at one time full of grief, at another playful, and then wild as the winds that roared about him, and fiery and sharp as the lightning that shot by him. The truth with which he conceived this, was not finer than his execution of it. Not for an instant, in his utmost violence, did he suffer the imbecility of the old man's anger to touch upon the ludicrous; when nothing but the most just conception and feeling of the character could have saved him from it.

It has been said that Lear was a study for any one who would make himself acquainted with the workings of an insane mind. There is no doubt of it. And it is not less true that Mr. Kean was as perfect an exemplification of it. His eye, when his senses are first forsaking him, giving a questioning look at what he saw, as if all before him was undergoing a strange and bewildering change which confused his brain—the wandering, lost motions of his hands, which seemed feeling for something familiar to them, on which they might take hold, and be assured of a safe reality—the under monotone of his voice, as if he was questioning his own being, and all which surrounded him—the continuous,

but slight oscillating motion of the body—all expressed, with fearful truth, the dreamy state of a mind fast unsettling, and making vain and weak efforts to find its way back to its wonted reason. There was a childish, feeble gladness in the eye, and a half piteous smile about the mouth at times, which one could scarce look upon without shedding tears. As the derangement increased upon him, his eye lost its notice of what surrounded him, wandering over every thing as if he saw it not, and fastening upon the creatures of his crazed brain. The helpless and delighted fondness with which he clings to Edgar as an insane brother, is another instance of the justness of Mr. Kean's conceptions. Nor does he lose the air of insanity even in the fine moralizing parts, and where he inveighs against the corruptions of the world. There is a madness even in his reason.

The violent and immediate changes of the passions in Lear, so hard to manage without offending us, are given by Mr. Kean with a spirit and fitness to nature which we had not imagined possible. These are equally well done both before and after he loses his reason. The most difficult scene in this respect is the last interview

between Lear and his daughters, Goneril and Regan—(and how wonderfully does Mr. Kean carry it through!)—the scene which ends with the horrid shout and cry with which he runs out mad from their presence, as if his very brain was on fire.

The last scene which we are allowed to have of Shakspeare's Lear, for the simply pathetic, was played by Mr. Kean with unmatched power. We sink down helpless under the oppressive grief. It lies like a dead weight upon our bosoms. We are denied even the relief of tears; and are thankful for the startling shudder that seizes us when he kneels to his daughter in the deploring weakness of his crazed grief.

I trust that Mr. Kean will be gratified in his wishes when he returns home, and be allowed to show his unequalled powers in the last scene of Lear, as Shakspeare has written it; and that this mighty work of genius will be no longer profaned by the miserable, mawkish sort of by-play (I have no other name for it) of Edgar's and Cordelia's loves. Nothing can surpass the impertinence of the man who made the change, but the folly of those who sanctioned it.

When I began, I had no other intention than

giving a few general impressions made upon me by Mr. Kean's acting; but, falling accidentally upon his Lear, I have been led into more particulars than I was aware of. It is only to take these as instances of his powers in Lear, and then to think of him as not at all inferior in his other characters, and some slight notion may be formed of what is thought of Mr. Kean by those who understand and like him. For neither this, nor all I could say, would reach his great and various powers.

Mr. Kean is never behind his author; but stands forward the living representative of the character he has drawn. When he plays out of Shakspeare, he fills up where his author is wanting, and when in Shakspeare, he gives not only what is set down, but all that the situation and circumstances attendant upon the being he personates, could possibly call forth. He seems at the time to have possessed himself of Shakspeare's imagination, and to have given it body and form. Read any scene of Shakspeare—for instance, the last of Lear that is played, and see how few words are there set down, and then remember how Kean fills it out with varied and multiplied expressions and circumstances,

and the truth of this remark will be too obvious for any one to deny. There are few men living, I believe, let them have studied Shakspeare ever so attentively, who can say that Mr. Kean has not helped them as much to a true conception of him, as their own labour had done for them before.

It is not easy to say in what character Mr. Kean plays best. He fits himself perfectly to each in turn; and if the effect he produces at one time, is less than at another, it is because of some inferiority in stage effect in the character. Othello is probably the greatest character for stage effect ever written. Mr. Kean, in playing it, has, from first to last, an uninterrupted power over us. When he commands, we are awed—when his face is all sensitive with love, and love thrills in his soft tones, all that our imaginations had pictured to us is realized. His jealousy, his hate, his fixed purposes, are all terrific and deadly. The groans wrung from him in his grief, have all the pathos and anguish of Esau's, when he stood before his old, blind father, and sent up “an exceeding bitter cry.”

Again, in Richard, how does he hurry forward to his object, sweeping away all between him and

it. The world and its affairs are nothing to him till he gains his end. He is all life, and action, and haste—he fills every part of the stage, and seems to do all that is done.

I have already said that his voice is harsh and breaking in his high tones, in his rage, but that this defect is of little consequence in such places. It is not well suited to the more declamatory parts. This, again, is scarce worth considering; for how very little is there of mere declamation in good English plays! But it is the finest in the world for all the passions and feelings which can be uttered in the middle and lower tones. In Lear—

“If you have poison for me I will drink it.”

And again,

“You do me wrong to take me o’ the grave;  
Thou art a soul in bliss.”

Why should I cite passages? Can any man open upon the scene in which these are contained, without Mr. Kean’s piteous looks and tones being present to him? And does not the mere remembrance of them, as he reads,

bring tears into his eyes? Yet, once more, in Othello—

“Had it pleased heaven  
To try me with affliction,” &c.

In the passage beginning with—

“O now forever  
Farewell the tranquil mind”——

there was “a mysterious confluence of sounds” passing off into infinite distance, and every thought and feeling within him seemed travelling with them. Even in common conversation his voice has a delightful influence upon you, and after hearing him talk for a while, your sensations will be much like those you have from hearing simple music.

In Othello, Mr. Kean is the most graceful being I ever saw. His is not a practised, educated grace, but the “unbought grace” of the soul, uttering itself in its beauty and grandeur in every movement of the outward man. When he says to Iago so touchingly, “Leave me, leave me, Iago,” and turning from him, walks to the back of the stage, raising his hands, and then bringing them down upon his head with clasped



fingers, stands thus with his back to us, there is a grace and an imposing grandeur in his figure which we gaze on with fixed admiration.

Talking of these things in Mr. Kean, is something like reading the "Beauties of Shakspeare." He is as perfect in his subordinate, as in his great parts. But he must be content to share with other men of genius, and think himself fortunate if one in a hundred sees his lesser beauties, and marks the truth, and delicacy, and refinement of his under playing. For instance—when he has no share in the action going on, he is not busy in putting himself into attitudes to draw attention, but stands or sits in a perfectly simple posture, like one with an engaged mind. His countenance, too, is in a state of ordinary repose, with only a slight, general expression of the character of his thoughts; which is all the face shows, when the mind is taken up in silence with its own reflections. It does not assume marked and violent expressions, as in soliloquy. When a man gives utterance to his thoughts, though alone, the charmed rest of the body is at once broken; he speaks in his gestures too, and the countenance is put into a sympathizing action.

I was first struck with this in Mr. Kean's Hamlet; for the deep and quiet interest, so marked in Hamlet's character, made the justness of his playing in this respect the more obvious.

Since then, I have observed him attentively, and have found the same true playing in his other characters.

This perfect conception of situation and its general effect, seems to require almost as much genius as his admirable conceptions of his characters. He deserves great praise for it; for there is so much of the subtilty of nature in it, if I may so speak, that while a very few are able from his help to put themselves into the situation, and admire the justness of his acting in it, the rest, both those who like him upon the whole, as well as those who profess to see little that is good in him, will be very apt to pass it over as altogether uninteresting.

Like most honest men, however, Mr. Kean receives at least a partial reward for his sacrifice of the praise of the many, to what he thinks the truth. For when he passes from the state of natural repose, even into that of gentle motion and ordinary discourse, he is at once filled with a spirit and life which he makes every one feel

who is not armour proof against him. This helps to the sparkling brightness and warmth of his playing; the grand secret of which, like that of colours in a picture, lies in a just contrast. We can all speculate concerning the general rules upon this; but when the man of genius gives us their results, how few are there who can trace them out with a delighted eye, or look with admiration upon the grand whole. Perhaps this very beauty in Mr. Kean has helped to an opinion, which no doubt is sometimes true, that he is too sharp and abrupt. I once heard some very sensible people wonder (where the dark shadow of a mountain fell upon a bright stream in strong outline) why the artist made his water of two colours, as it was all one and the same thing.

Instances of Mr. Kean's keeping of situations were very striking in the opening of the trial scene in the Iron Chest, and in Hamlet, when his father's ghost tells him the story of his death.

The determined composure to which he is bent up in the first, must be present with every one who saw him. And, though from my immediate purpose, shall I pass by the startling and appalling change, when madness seized upon his brain, and rent him in pieces, with the deadly

swiftness and power of a fanged monster? Wonderfully as this last part was played, we cannot well imagine how much the sudden and entire change of the whole man added to the terror of the scene. The temple stood fixed on its foundation—the earthquake shook it, and it fell. Is this one of his violent contrasts?

While Mr. Kean listened, in Hamlet, to the father's story, the whole man, soul and body, was absorbed in deep attention mingled with a tempered awe. His posture was as simple as possible, with a very slight inclination forward. The spirit was the spirit of his father whom he had loved and revered, and who was to that moment ever present in his thoughts. The first superstitious terror at meeting him had passed off. The account of his father's appearance given him by Horatio and the watch, and his having followed him some distance, too, had in a degree familiarized him to the sight, and he stood before us in the intense stillness of one who was to hear, then or never, what was to be told; but without that eager reaching forward which other players give, and which would be right, perhaps, in any character but Hamlet, who always connects with the present the past and

what's to come, and mingles reflection with his immediate feelings, however deep.

As an instance of Mr. Kean's familiar, and, if I may be allowed the term, domestic acting, the first scene in the fourth act of his *Sir Giles* with *Lovell* may be taken. His manner at meeting *Lovell*, and through the conversation with him—the easy way in which he turns his chair and leans upon the back of it, were perfectly graceful, yet as true as real life; and *Sir Giles* was a person actually existing, and at that moment engaged in conversation in *Lovell's* room.

It is these things, scarcely less than his great parts, which make Mr. Kean the first actor of this, or, perhaps, any age. He must always make a strong impression; but to suppose the world at large capable of a right estimate of his various powers, would be forming a judgment against every day's proofs. The gradual manner in which his genius has been opened to me, has taught me to feel that it is not for such as I to set its bounds.

After all this, I should hardly be forgiven without adding a little fault-finding. Mr. Kean still plays his hands rather too much at times, and moves about the dress over his breast and neck

too frequently, though too much of these, is better than too little, in his hurried and impatient parts. It is as well to mention these trifles. Not that they do or ought to disturb those who can relish his playing; but because when we admire a man, and especially where his genius is of a character to create a kind of personal attachment, we are apt to feel restive that there should be any little, unimportant defects about him to give those, who do not feel towards him as we do, an opportunity to carp.

We wish that Mr. Kean would not depart so frequently from the received readings of Shakspeare. That he does not do it from failure of memory is quite certain; and judging by other things, it is no less certain that it is not from a want of good taste. Whatever may be the cause, we hope he will make a change in this respect.

What we must ask further of him, and what perhaps he will consider a sacrifice to grant us, is to be more sparing of the sudden change from violent voice and gesticulation to a low conversation tone and subdued manner. He uses this very often, and with great effect and propriety, in Sir Giles Overreach; for Sir Giles is playing

his part. So too in Lear, for Lear's passions are gusty and shifting. But, for the most part, it is too marked and striking an excellence to bear frequent repetition, and had better be sometimes spared where it might, considered alone, be properly enough used, for the sake of bringing it in with greater effect in some other place.

Though I have taken up a great deal of room, I must end without saying half of what occurs to me. There are some, I know, who will think that I have said quite enough, and been prodigal of praise. Thinking of Mr. Kean as I do, I could not honestly have said less. It is a low and wicked thing to keep back from merit its due; and I do not know more miserable beings than those who, instead of feeling themselves elevated and made happy by another's excellence, and having a blessed consciousness of belonging to the same race with him, turn envious at his distinction, and feel as if the riches of his intellect made the poverty of theirs.

Oh what a world is this, when what is comely  
Envenoms him that bears it!

I owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Kean for the good which the little I have seen of him has done

my mind and heart. Would that what I could say might at all repay him. His genius in his calling has a right to our highest praise; nor does an ardent enthusiasm of what is great argue such an unhappy want of discrimination, as that measured and cold approval, which is bestowed alike upon men of mediocrity, and those of gifted minds.



## POETRY.

---

WRITTEN IN SPRING.

This gentle breath which eddies round my cheek—  
This respiration of the waking spring—  
How eloquently sweet it seems to speak  
Of hope and joy to every living thing!  
To every?—No, it speaks not thus to all  
Alike of hope; where misery gnaws the heart,  
Her gentle breathings on the senses fall  
Like hateful thoughts that make the memory start.  
The soul grows selfish where enjoyment flies,  
And, loathing, curses what it cannot taste;  
This glorious sun, and yon blue blessed skies,  
And this green earth, but tell him of the past;  
The frightful past—that other name for death—  
That, when recall'd, like mocking spectres come;  
In forms of life, without the living breath,  
Like things that speak, yet organless and dumb!  
For all that seems in this fair world to live,  
To live to man, must catch the quick'ning ray  
From man's free soul; and they but freely give  
Back unto him the life he gave; for they

Are dead to him who lives not unto them.

But unto him—whose happy soul reposes  
In love's sweet dream—how exquisite a gem  
Seems every dewdrop on these budding roses!  
The humblest plant that sprouts beneath his feet,  
The ragged brier, nay e'en the common grass,  
Within that soul a kindred image meet,  
As if reflected from an answering glass.  
And how they seem by sympathy to lend

Their youthful freshness to each rising thought,  
As if the mind had just begun to send

Her faculties abroad, uncurb'd, untaught,  
From all in nature beautiful and fair

To build her splendid fabrics, while the heart,  
Itself deluding, seems by magic rare

To give a substance to each airy part.  
Sweet age of first impressions! free and light!

When all the senses, like triumphal ports,  
Did let into the soul, by day, by night,

The gorgeous pageants pouring from the courts  
Of Nature's vast dominions!—substance then

To the heart's faith; but now that youth's bright dawn  
No longer shines, they flit like shadowy men

That walk on ceilings;—for the light is gone!  
Yet no—not gone; for unto him that loves,

The heart is youthful and the faith is strong;  
And be it love, or be it youth, that moves

The soul to joy, that light will live as long.

And, oh, how blest this kind reacting law!  
 That the young heart, with Nature's beauties glowing,  
 Should need, in all it felt, in all it saw,  
 Another heart to share its overflowing;  
 While he that feels the pure expansive power  
 Of joyous love, must pour his feelings forth  
 On every tree, and herb, and fragrant flower,  
 And all that grows upon the beauteous earth.

---

To E\*\*\*\*

I heard the Nightingale complain,  
 While sadder grew the solemn eve:  
 Oh wherefore poured she here her strain?  
 At me why seem'd she thus to grieve?

I ne'er the sharpened arrow sent  
 To wound her rustling wing in air;  
 I ne'er through rushy dingle went  
 Her low laid nest to rob or scare.

Now hark! she mounts aloft so high  
 Her mournful voice grows faint, and faint;  
 I fear some spirit in the sky  
 May hear her wild, accusing plaint!

Then wo to him that harm'd the bird!

Henceforth no prosperous days he'll know;  
Disease shall smite his flock and herd:—

E'en now I hear them bleat and low!

Freshets shall overthrow his mills,

And blighting frosts destroy his corn;  
And, oh, the worst of human ills—

His love shall be repaid with scorn!

No, 'twas not I:—some distant hind

Has done the rueful wrong; and she  
But hovers o'er my cot to find

A heart attuned to sympathy.

Thus, Lady, in thy burdened heart

Corroding lives some wound unseen,  
Thou wouldst not to the youth impart  
Who is the guilty cause, I ween.

Then welcome to thy hermit friend

Though half disguised the converse mild,  
That to thyself relief may lend,  
But leave him of thy thought beguil'd.

How glad by that same lattice side,

Where late I heard sad Philomel,  
With thee I'd lean, and hear thee chide,  
Nor ask what you'd not wish to tell.



THE

# **IDLE MAN.**

No. II.

---

How various his employments, whom the world  
Galls idle. *Casper.*

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NEW-YORK :

WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.

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W. Grattan, Printer.

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1821.

*Southern District of New-York, ss.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of May, in the forty fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, WILEY & HALSTED, of the said District, have deposited in this Office, the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

*The Idle Man.*

How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle. *Comper.*

*In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" And also, to an Act, entitled, "An Act, supplementary to an Act, entitled, an Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."*

G. L. THOMPSON,  
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

## THE SON.

---

———thou art all obedience, love and goodness.  
I dare say that which thousand fathers cannot ;  
And that's my precious comfort; never son  
Was in the way of more celestial rising;——  
*The Old Law.*

THERE is no virtue without a characteristic beauty to make it particularly loved of the good, and to make the bad ashamed of their neglect of it. To do what is right argues superior taste as well as morals; and those whose practice is evil feel an inferiority of intellectual power and enjoyment, even where they take no concern for a principle. Doing well has something more in it than the fulfilling of a duty. It is a cause of a just sense of elevation of character; it clears and strengthens the spirits; it gives higher reaches of thought; it widens our benevolence, and makes the current of our peculiar affections swift and deep. A sacrifice was never yet offered to a prin-



ciple, that was not made up to us by self approval, and the consideration of what our degradation would have been had we done otherwise. Certainly, it is a pleasant and a wise thing then to follow what is right, when we only go along with our affections, and take the easy way of the virtuous propensities of our nature.

The world is sensible of these truths, let it act as it may. It is not because of his integrity alone that it relies on an honest man; but it has more confidence in his judgment and wise conduct in the long run, than in the schemes of those of greater intellect, who go at large without any landmarks of principle. So that virtue seems of a double nature, and to stand oftentimes in the place of what we call talent.

This reasoning, or rather feeling, of the world is all right; for the honest man only falls in with the order of nature, which is grounded in truth, and will endure along with it. And such a hold has a good man upon the world, that even where he has not been called upon to make a sacrifice to a principle, or to take a stand against wrong, but has merely avoided running into vices, and suffered himself to be borne along by the delightful and virtuous affections of private life, and has

found his pleasure in practising the duties of home, he is looked up to with respect, as well as regarded with kindness. We attach certain notions of refinement to his thoughts, and of depth to his sentiment. The impression he makes on us is beautiful and peculiar. Other men in his presence, though we have nothing to object to them, and though they may be very well in their way, affect us as lacking something—we can hardly tell what—a certain sensitive delicacy of character and manner, without which they strike us as more or less vulgar.

No creature in the world has this character so finely marked in him, as a respectful and affectionate son—particularly in his relation to his mother. Every little attention he pays her is not only an expression of filial attachment, and a grateful acknowledgment of past cares, but is an evidence of a tenderness of disposition which moves us the more, because not looked on so much as an essential property in a man's character, as an added grace which is bestowed only upon a few. His regards do not appear like mere habits of duty, nor does his watchfulness of his mother's wishes seem like taught submission to her will. They are the native courtesies of a

feeling mind, showing themselves amidst stern virtues and masculine energies, like gleams of light on points of rocks. They are delightful as evidences of power yielding voluntary homage to the delicacy of the soul. The armed knee is bent, and the heart of the mailed man laid bare.

Feelings that would seem to be at variance with each other, meet together and harmonize in the breast of a son. Every call of the mother which he answers to, and every act of submission which he performs, are not only so many acknowledgments of her authority, but, also, so many instances of kindness and marks of protecting regard. The servant and defender, the child and guardian, are all mingled in him. The world looks on him in this way; and to draw upon a man the confidence, the respect, and the love of the world, it is enough to say of him, he is an excellent Son.

In looking over some papers of a deceased acquaintance I found the following fragment. He had frequently spoken to me of the person whom it concerned, and who had been his schoolfellow. I remember well his one day telling me, that thinking the character of his friend, and some circumstances in his life, were of such a kind that an

interesting, moral little story might be made from them, he had undertaken it; but considering as he was going on, that bringing the private character and feelings of a deceased friend before the world, was something like sacrilege, though done under a fictitious name, he had stopped soon after beginning the tale—that he had laid it away amongst his papers, and had never looked at it again. As the person it concerns has been a long time dead, and no relation survives, I do not feel that there can be any impropriety in my now making it public. I give it as it was written, though evidently not revised by my friend. Though hastily put together, and beginning as abruptly as it ends, and with little of story, and no novelty in the circumstances, yet there is a mournful tenderness in it which, I trust, will interest others in some portion as it did me.

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“The sun not set yet, ‘Thomas?’” “Not quite, Sir. It blazes through the trees on the hill yonder as if their branches were all on fire.”

Arthur raised himself heavily forward, and with his hat still over his brow, turned his glazed and

dim eyes towards the setting sun. It was only the night before that he had heard his mother was ill, and could survive but a day or two. He had lived nearly apart from society, and being a lad of a thoughtful, dreamy mind, had made a world to himself. His thoughts and feelings were so much in it, that except in relation to his own home, there were the same vague and strange notions in his brain concerning the state of things surrounding him, as we have of a foreign land.

The main feeling which this self-made world excited in him was love, and like most of his age, he had formed to himself a being suited to his own fancies. This was the romance of life, and though men with minds like his make imagination to stand oftentimes in the place of real existence, and to take to itself as deep feeling and concern, yet in domestic relations, which are so near, and usual, and private, they feel longer and more deeply than those who look upon their homes as only a better part of the world which they belong to. Indeed, in affectionate and good men of a visionary cast, it is in some sort only realizing their hopes and desires, to turn them homeward. Arthur felt that it was so, and he loved his household the more that they gave him an

earnest of one day realizing all his hopes and attachments.

Arthur's mother was peculiarly dear to him, in having a character so much like his own. For though the cares and attachments of life had long ago taken place of a fanciful existence in her, yet her natural turn of mind was strong enough to give to these something of the romance of her disposition. This had led to a more than usual openness and intimacy between Arthur and his mother, and now brought to his remembrance the hours they had sat together by the fire light, when he listened to her mild and melancholy voice, as she spoke of what she had undergone at the loss of her parents and husband. Her gentle rebuke of his faults, her affectionate look of approval when he had done well, her care that he should be a just man, and her motherly anxiety lest the world should go hard with him, all crowded into his mind, and he thought that every worldly attachment was hereafter to be a vain thing.

He had passed the night between violent, tumultuous grief, and numb insensibility. Stepping into the carriage, with a slow, weak motion, like one who was quitting his sick chamber for the first time, he began his journey homeward. As

he lifted his eyes upward, the few stars that were here and there over the sky, seemed to look down in pity, and shed a religious and healing light upon him. But they soon went out, one after another, and as the last faded from his imploring sight, it was as if every thing good and holy had forsaken him. The faint tint in the east soon became a ruddy glow, and the sun, shooting upward, burst over every living thing in full glory. The sight went to Arthur's sick heart, as if it were in mockery of his misery.

Leaning back in his carriage, with his hand over his eyes, he was carried along, hardly sensible it was day. The old servant, Thomas, who was sitting by his side, went on talking in a low monotonous tone; but Arthur only heard something sounding in his ears, scarcely heeding that it was a human voice. He had a sense of wearisomeness from the motion of the carriage, but in all things else the day passed as a melancholy dream.

Almost the first words Arthur spoke were those I have mentioned. As he looked out upon the setting sun, he shuddered through his whole frame, and then became sick and pale. He thought he knew the hill near him; and as they wound round it, some peculiar old trees appeared,

and he was in a few minutes in the midst of the scenery near his home. The river before him reflecting the rich evening sky, looked as if poured out from a molten mine. The birds, gathering in, were shooting across each other, bursting into short, gay notes, or singing their evening songs in the trees. It was a bitter thing to find all so bright and cheerful, and so near his own home too. His horses' hoofs struck upon the old wooden bridge. The sound went to his heart. It was here his mother took her last leave of him, and blessed him.

As he passed through the village there was a feeling of strangeness, that every thing should be just as it was when he left it. There was an undefined thought floating in his mind, that his mother's state should produce a visible change in all that he had been familiar with. But the boys were at their noisy games in the street, the labourers returning, talking together, from their work, and the old men sitting quietly at their doors. He concealed himself as well as he could, and bade Thomas hasten on.

As they drew near the house, the night was shutting in about it, and there was a melancholy gusty sound in the trees. Arthur felt as if ap-



proaching his mother's tomb. He entered the parlour. All was as gloomy and still as a deserted house. Presently he heard a slow, cautious step, over head. It was in his mother's chamber. His sister had seen him from the window. She hurried down, and threw her arms about her brother's neck, without uttering a word. As soon as he could speak, he asked, "is she alive?"—he could not say, my mother. "She is sleeping," answered his sister, "and must not know to night that you are here; she is too weak to bear it now." "I will go look at her then, while she sleeps," said he, drawing his handkerchief from his face. His sister's sympathy had made him shed the first tears which had fallen from him that day, and he was more composed.

He entered the chamber with a deep and still awe upon him; and as he drew near his mother's bed-side, and looked on her pale, placid, and motionless face, he scarcely dared breathe, lest he should disturb the secret communion that the soul was holding with the world into which it was about to enter. The loss that he was about suffering, and his heavy grief, were all forgotten in the feeling of a holy inspiration, and he was, as it were, in the midst of invisible spirits, ascend-

ing and descending. His mother's lips moved slightly as she uttered an indistinct sound. He drew back, and his sister went near to her, and she spoke. It was the same gentle voice which he had known and felt from his childhood. The exaltation of his soul left him—he <sup>sunk</sup> sunk down—and his misery went over him like a flood.

The next day, as soon as his mother became composed enough to see him, Arthur went into her chamber. She stretched out her feeble hand, and turned towards him, with a look that blessed him. It was the short struggle of a meek spirit. She covered her eyes with her hand, and the tears trickled down between her pale, thin fingers. As soon as she became tranquil, she spoke of the gratitude she felt at being spared to see him before she died.

“My dear mother,” said Arthur—but he could not go on. His voice was choked, his eyes filled with tears, and the agony of his soul was visible in his face. “Do not be so afflicted, Arthur, at the loss of me. We are not to part for ever. Remember, too, how comfortable and happy you have made my days. Heaven, I know, will bless so good a son as you have been to me. You will have that consolation, my son,

which visits but a few—you will be able to look back upon your past conduct to me, not without pain only, but with a holy joy. And think hereafter of the peace of mind you give me, now that I am about to die, in the thought that I am leaving your sister to your love and care. So long as you live, she will find you a father and brother to her.” She paused for a moment. “I have always felt that I could meet death with composure; but I did not know,” she said, with a tremulous voice, her lips quivering—“I did not know how hard a thing it would be to leave my children, till now that the hour has come.”

After a little while, she spoke of his father, and said, she had lived with the belief that he was mindful of her, and with the conviction, which grew stronger as death approached, that she should meet him in another world. She said but little more, as she grew weaker and weaker every hour. Arthur sat by in silence, holding her hand. He saw that she was sensible he was watching her countenance, for every now and then she opened her dull eye and looked towards him, and endeavoured to smile.

The day wore slowly away. The sun went down, and the melancholy and still twilight came

on. Nothing was heard but the ticking of the watch, telling him with a resistless power, that the hour was drawing nigh. He gasped, as if under some invisible, gigantic grasp, which it was not for human strength to struggle against.

It was now quite dark, and by the pale light of the night-lamp in the chimney corner, the furniture in the room threw huge and uncouth figures over the walls. All was unsubstantial and visionary, and the shadowy ministers of death appeared gathering round, waiting the duty of the hour appointed them. Arthur shuddered for a moment with superstitious awe; but the solemn elevation which a good man feels at the sight of the dying, took possession of him, and he became calm again.

The approach of death has so much which is exalting, that our grief is, for the time, forgotten. And could one who had seen Arthur a few hours before, now have looked upon the grave and grand repose of his countenance, he would hardly have known him.

The livid hue of death was fast spreading over his mother's face. He stooped forward to catch the sound of her breathing. It grew quick and faint.—“My mother.”—She opened her eyes, for

the last time, upon him—a faint flush passed over her cheek—there was the serenity of an angel in her look—her hand just pressed his. It was all over.)

His spirit had endured to its utmost. It ~~sank~~ sunk down from its unearthly height; and with his face upon his mother's pillow, he wept like a child. He arose with a violent effort, and stepping into the adjoining chamber, spoke to his aunt. "It is past," said he. "Is my sister asleep?—Well, then, let her have rest; she needs it." He then went to his own chamber and shut himself in.

It is a merciful thing that the intense suffering of sensitive minds makes to itself a relief. Violent grief brings on a torpor, and an indistinctness, and dimness, as from long watching. It is not till the violence of affliction has subsided, and gentle and soothing thoughts can find room to mix with our sorrow, and holy consolations can minister to us, that we are able to know fully our loss, and see clearly what has been torn away from our affections. It was so with Arthur. Unconnected and strange thoughts, with melancholy but half-formed images, were floating in his mind, and now and then a gleam of light would pass

through it, as if he had been in a troubled trance, and all was right again. His worn and tired feelings at last found rest in sleep.

It is an impression which we cannot rid ourselves of if we would, when sitting by the body of a friend, that he has still a consciousness of our presence—that though the common concerns of the world have no more to do with him, he has still a love and care of us. The face which we had so long been familiar with, when it was all life and motion, seems only in a state of rest. We know not how to make it real to ourselves, that the body before us is not a living thing.

Arthur was in such a state of mind, as he sat alone in the room by his mother, the day after her death. It was as if her soul had been in paradise, and was now holding communion with pure spirits there, though it still abode in the body that lay before him. He felt as if sanctified by the presence of one to whom the other world had been laid open—as if under the love and protection of one made holy. The religious reflections that his mother had early taught him, gave him strength; a spiritual composure stole over him, and he found himself prepared to perform the last offices to the dead.

Is it not enough to see our friends die, and part with them for the remainder of our days—to reflect that we shall hear their voices no more, and that they will never look on us again—to see that turning to corruption which was but just now alive, and eloquent, and beautiful with all the sensations of the soul? Are our sorrows so sacred and peculiar as to make the world as vanity to us, and the men of it as strangers, and shall we not be left to our afflictions for a few hours? Must we be brought out at such a time to the concerned, or careless gaze of those we know not, or be made to bear the formal proffers of consolations from acquaintances who will go away and forget it all? Shall we not be suffered a little while, a holy and healing communion with the dead? Must the kindred stillness and gloom of our dwelling be changed for the solemn show of the pall, the talk of the passers-by, and the broad and piercing light of the common sun? Must the ceremonies of the world wait on us even to the open graves of our friends?

When the hour came, Arthur rose with a firm step and fixed eye, though his whole face was tremulous with the struggle within him. He went to his sister, and took her arm within his. The

bell struck. Its heavy, undulating sound rolled forward like a sea. He felt a violent beating through his whole frame, which shook him that he reeled. It was but a momentary weakness. He moved on, passing those who surrounded him, as if they had been shadows. While he followed the slow hearse, there was a vacancy in his eye as it rested on the coffin, which showed him hardly conscious of what was before him. His spirit was with his mother's. As he reached the grave, he ~~shrank~~ <sup>shrank</sup> back and turned deadly pale; but sinking his head upon his breast, and drawing his hat over his face, he stood motionless as a statue till the service was over.

He had gone through all that the forms of society required of him. For as painful as the effort was, and as little suited as such forms were to his own thoughts upon the subject, yet he could not do any thing that might appear to the world like a want of reverence and respect for his mother. The scene was ended, and the inward struggle over; and now that he was left to himself, the greatness of his loss came up full and distinctly before him.

( It was a dreary and chilly evening when he returned home. When he entered the house from



which his mother had gone for ever, a sense of dreary emptiness oppressed him, as if his very abode had been deserted by every living thing. He walked into his mother's chamber. The naked bedstead, and the chair in which she used to sit, were all that was left in the room. As he threw himself back into the chair, he groaned in the bitterness of his spirit. A feeling of forlornness came over him which was not to be relieved by tears. She, whom he watched over in her dying hour, and whom he had talked to as she lay before him in death, as if she could hear and answer him, had gone from him. Nothing was left for the senses to fasten fondly on, and time had not yet taught him to think of her only as a spirit. But time and holy endeavours brought this consolation; and the little of life that a wasting disease left him, was past by him, when alone, in thoughtful tranquillity; and amongst his friends he appeared with that gentle cheerfulness which, before his mother's death, had been a part of his nature.))

## A LETTER FROM TOWN.

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"Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?"

*Henry the IVth.*

"If your concern for pleasing others arises from innate benevolence, it never fails of success; if from vanity to excel, its disappointment is no less certain."

*The Spectator.*

"In a word, good-breeding shows itself most, where, to an ordinary eye, it appears the least."

*The Spectator.*

I have taken the liberty to publish the following, without saying a word to my friend about the matter. I will, however, start fair with him and others as to any letters which I may hereafter receive. I intend turning all of them into my book which I may consider worthy a place in it.

Essay reading is exceeding easy reading, and, because it is so, people who have not made the trial, fancy it as easy writing. The truth is, that it is more exhausting and wearing to the mind to furnish much of that which commonly goes under

the name of light literature, than to bring together the learning and thoughts of others, however great a show of authorities we may put forward in evidence of our labour.

As I intend giving myself to this work so long as the public will read me, I must husband my time and strength, and not waste them in the odd jobs of letter writing and the like, unless my friends will sometimes "change work" with me, by lending me a helping hand when I lack matter to fill my pages with. I have no doubt that this hint will enlarge the number of my correspondents; and let them amount to as many as they may, I shall not be at all concerned, provided my introducing them to the world may serve, for the most part, instead of answers to their epistles.

I suppose the public would like to have some account of the person and character of this my friend. It would hardly do to give it to them in his lifetime; but should I outlive him, as Heaven grant, they shall not be disappointed.

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I SELDOM think of Doctor Johnson, without calling to mind his love of an inn. It is one of

the best natured traits in his character. There certainly is no place in the world where a man feels so independent and easy, and so inclined to take clear comfort.

It is equally well fitted to nearly all sorts of characters. The blackguard goes to it to lord it over his own *squad*, put the host in good humour, have full swing amongst the grooms and waiters, and sharpen his wits upon the comers-in. He visits it nightly, as well for his improvement, as his pleasure; and goes home as satisfied when he has done well in his calling, as those who have finished more serious duties with duller heads. The humorist may have his own way there, and the surly man keep his corner, and pass himself off for one of grave taciturnity: in short, no where else can so many various and opposite dispositions herd together, with so little annoyance to each other.

It is the world "in little." Men of all sizes, complexions, and callings are as close stowed as beasts at a cattle show, and give as good opportunity to observe their points and varieties. Here are to be met with, politicians who never had place or pension, with plans to keep order without law—beaux in rusty hats, and coats white

in the shoulders—gray-headed midshipmen who could “sink a navy”—Laputa philosophers—hen-pecked husbands venting their lungs and spiring up their courage—quiet, staid bachelors, who eat and drink by weight and measure, and sleep by the clock—the dapper gentleman, whose unsoiled suit has been as long known as the wearer, fresh and smooth as a ladies’ man—and your swaggerer, always dirty and always rude. . Besides these and many more in contrast, come the fillers-up of society, men whose differences it is quite a science to trace out—a science, like many other sciences which make more noise in the world, that will hardly pay a man, who has something of his own, for the pains of learning it.

One who wishes to study his fellow men may do it here, and save himself a deal of travel. He has nothing to do but to take his seat snugly in a corner, and look and listen, and now and then throw in a remark in way of suggestion, just to see what it will come to.—Out of all doubt, it is a situation best fitted to that sort of men who keep about in society for the sole purpose of speculating upon human nature. Here they find every one off his guard, and they are not kept back by the restraints of ceremony.

One of these observers will enter a room of motley company, with a grave, downward aspect, and pace it to and fro with a measured step, as if lost in abstraction, and busy about some embarrassing circumstance. If you watch him narrowly, you will presently catch his eye scaling along over the group of talkers you are standing amongst, as if he were taking notes of each one in the circle.

I dined out to-day, and told our old friend, Thomson, I would meet him at the tavern, that he might take me to his club more conveniently. It was a raw, chilly evening, after a warm day—a time, of all others, when a fire is most cheering. Every one drew near it with open hands; then rubbing them together in a kind of self-congratulatory way, and with a working of the shoulders, and a throw of the head and body a little back, was all prepared for a set to at a long talk upon whatever was going.

I was sitting in an old round-a-bout, which stood in one corner, waiting the coming of my friend, and without taking any part in the conversation, when a person like one I have just before mentioned, walked slowly into the room. He was past the middle age, and his tailor was pro-

bably as old as himself, for his dark drab coat was of the fashion of some twenty years back. There was a staidness in his manner, as much out of fashion as the cut of his clothes, which suited well with the strong sagacity of his face. The nose and the lines from it expressed sarcasm, which was tempered, however, by a playful good nature about the mouth. His eyes had that look between suspended thought and inward contemplation, which makes the finest eye in the world. For the most part, there was a rich haze over them; but when they turned their notice outward, they rayed out like the sun bursting through a mist.

His eyes and the expression of his mouth made me observe him more closely, and with a good degree of interest. For it is not often that we meet with men who pass much of their time in society, only because of a certain talent at discriminating and observing, who have not hard, self-pleased, self-satisfied countenances, showing a sort of merrymaking out of the weaknesses of our kind, which no good man can take a share in. Yet they make smooth way through the world. It is ten to one that he they next meet with is glad of a laugh, though at another's cost:

beside that he feels safe and in favor while under the wing of one of these world-wits. They know full well that few men are brave enough to go to war against ridicule, and that as few will put themselves at risk for a general principle.

An habitual, close observation of the customs, manners, and characters of society, will beget in even the best men a relish for the ridiculous. It is past question that a common-sense man, who stands by and sees how much folly is wrapt up safe in ceremony—how much pretence covers indifference, and how far, even amongst the knowing, the conventional passes current for the true—must have a scorn of the foppery with which the plain sincerity of life is so fantastically tricked out.

He, then, who has lived long amongst men as a looker-on, and has kept his exhorting from turning to irony, and his earnestness to indifference, has given a thousand fold better proof of sound principle and a thoroughly good heart, than he who, in a fancied benevolence while apart from the world, sees nothing but the growth of virtue, and exalts himself in raising his species. A little taunting of the world may go with a right love of it; and he may be humble under his own vices



who rebukes another's; else who would be our censors but the unkind, or our teachers but the proud? In a benevolent heart, our very frailties beget an anxiety which quickens and fills out the growth of the affections; and the keen sighted to our faults are not those who love us least, or are most blind to our virtues.

These thoughts passed rapidly through my mind while I was looking upon the shrewd, sarcastic, benevolent face before me. The honest owner of it soon saw that I was observing him; and whether it was that he perceived any like expression of character in mine, or that he was inclined to sift me, I cannot tell—(I rather think there was a sympathy between us)—after traversing the room once or twice more, he made his way into the circle next to me. Taking up the poker and passing it between the bars in the same deliberate manner as the Vicar Primrose did, when about upsetting his daughters' washes—"what companionable, talkative creatures a brisk fire makes folks of a dull day," said he. This was spoken in that low tone, and half soliloquising manner, in which one utters himself who wishes to bring on a conversation with his next neighbour, yet does not feel at liberty to do it, by way of direct ad-

dress, and so throws out a remark for him to take up or not as he pleases.

"Yes," I replied, drawing myself up and turning towards the fire too; "they cluster together with spirits as much astir, as flies on the sunny side of a tree of a frosty morning."

Putting down the poker, and straightening up suddenly, he looked at me with a sociable expression of face, as if we had known each other perfectly well, and drawing a chair into the circle, said, as he sat himself down by me,—“you are from the country, Sir, I presume?”

“I am so. I come to town now and then to see an old friend and give my faculties a jog in the crowd.”

“Two very good reasons,” he remarked. “And may I ask without being impertinent, whether you have two more as good for making the country your home?”

“I prefer the country, inasmuch as a man sees there less of the frivolities of his species, and more of nature, than in town, and stands a better chance to have a more equable temper, and a better turn of mind.”

“True,” he answered. “The flies you just now spoke of will never let a man into their little

vanities, impertinencies, and enmities, however long he may stand feeling his heart fill with gladness and good-will while looking on so much of the enjoyment which God gives to all creatures."

"That is from no want of honesty in them," said I. "They would not lie to us, could we understand their language. They do not keep two characters on hand, the one bad, the other good, like a man with his study coat and another for visiting. I could be well content with the world, bad as it is, would men but show themselves a little more plainly."

"The difficulty in knowing men," he replied, "arises not only from a design in them to deceive us, but also from a proneness to deceive themselves. Now look you round," said he, with a half good-natured, half sarcastic smile, and giving a side glance at the company, "upon any dozen of men you may happen amongst, and it's odds but you will find that ten of them have been all their lives industriously making up for themselves false characters—have thrown away what belonged to them, and might have done good service, to put on that which perhaps was well enough in itself, but has become fantastical and absurd, because it fits ill and is out of place. This lost la-

bour is sometimes from self-ignorance, but as often, to be sure, from want of thorough honesty. The best of us begin with cheating the world more or less, and end, for the most part, our own dupes."

"The world is perpetually struggling against nature," said I. "Who stops to consider, that individual peculiarities of mind and manner are not to be changed, without making an inconsistency of the parts taken together?"

"You are right," he answered. "Every man has by nature certain modes of expression, a manner, and motions of the body proper to himself. No one is, perhaps, free from little awkwardnesses, as they are called, of one kind or another. Now, though these are not well in themselves, yet, considered in their relations, there is a fitness in them, which makes them even agreeable to a discerning man. They are, in general, in harmony with the structure of the body, but, what is better, they are so many honest indications of a man's mind and disposition, which are continually coming from him, and laying his character open to us without his observing them. They are in some sort a part of the very constitution of the being they belong to, and are

so intimately connected with his thoughts and feelings, that he will find it hard to rid himself of them without injuring his mind. He is instantly put into a forced state by so doing—carrying on a double operation, and working under rule for life. For, after all, he can never make it to himself so much a habit, as to forget his fashion of doing a thing, in his concern for what he does. In this way, he is for ever putting teasing checks upon the free play of his ordinary feelings, and breaking up the simple movements of his grand impulses. So he loses his credit with the world even for the little sincerity that he has left to himself, and fails, in the end, of his effect, from his too great anxiety about it.” “My dear Sir,” said he abruptly, and turning suddenly towards me, “did you, for instance, ever see a perfectly graceful speaker, as the ladies would call him, without being heartily tired of him after twice or thrice hearing him?”

“No,” answered I; “your elegant speakers are very much like your Blair writers; there is no fault to find with them, only that we are soon weary of them both.”

“They always affect me in the same way,” said he. “Nor can I call to mind a man who

has made himself felt after being heard many times, who, either from the too frequent repetition of some peculiar gesture proper enough, or from some very odd one, has not set all rules of gesticulation at naught. The most stirring speaker I ever heard, was remarkable for a very singular motion of the hand; yet it was natural to him and always produced an effect, and I never remember it without a kind of delight, and free from any thing of the ludicrous. A man should take care how he new models his manner; for unless he is peculiarly fortunate, the chance is that he will cast off what we could very well put up with, fancying to himself that he is about delighting us with what in truth we shall never tolerate. A bad natural manner is bad enough, but a bad artificial one is abominable."

"There are certain tricks of the body," I replied, "generally proceeding from diseased nerves, which a man had better correct. But the worst of them never make him half so ridiculous, as an awkward man who puts himself to school to the graces. The most remarkable thing about the latter will be a stiff sort of motion, aiming at ease, and a clumsy endeavour after elegance. There are others of a happy temperament and a supple-

ness of body, who undertake to refine upon what nature has done for them, and so part with that which made every one pleased and at home, he knew not why, to take up with obtrusive graces and impertinent grimace, and thus they turn their manners into forms and dresses, instead of leaving them the mere representatives of a polite, well ordered mind."

"Very true," said my new acquaintance; "and if the mind is well improved, and right feelings brought forward, what we call the manners will take care of themselves. Make it a child's main principle to love the truth and always hold to it, and he will have an open and manly decision of manner, which will clear his way for him wherever he goes. Give him a tasteful mind, and there will be beautiful emanations from it, playing about him; even on ordinary occasions. Teach him that selfishness defeats its own purposes, and makes the most polite sometimes vulgar—that in common intercourse a man is to be more mindful of others than of himself—that he is not to press hard his own tastes and opinions, till they give uneasiness—that it is best to find out the bent of another's feelings, and fall in with them where they are not at variance with the

truth—that we are rather to talk upon what our companions are familiar with, than unfeelingly to parade before their ignorance a show of what we know—that, unless some occasion calls for it, we are not to keep ahead of those we are with, instead of walking by their side—that our principal object should be to produce a happy state of things wherever we go, and that in this way we shall make sure our own satisfying enjoyments, and without the mortifying sense of a selfish aim—and you will do more upon these few, simple principles to make a thorough gentleman, than all the pedantry of polite education, than all the outside endeavours of the professors and scholars of elegant accomplishments could ever teach or comprehend.”

This may sound a little climacteric to you, my dear friend; but coming from a thoughtful man past middle life, who had not lost his feelings with his hairs, it took hold of me from its simple earnestness; and more so, as I marked the play of his feelings in his face growing stronger and quicker as he went on, and a flush of excitement spreading gradually over his pale countenance.

He paused and looked down for a moment, as if sensible that his zeal had led him into some-



thing like an harangue, and to take more to himself than a well-bred man should ordinarily do, especially when with a stranger. The feeling and delicate embarrassment of his manner moved me a good deal, particularly when I considered that it was shown towards so young a man as I am.

More to relieve him than from any wish to talk (for I had much rather have listened to him) I began saying something about the tiresome sameness of what is called high life in a city. He raised his head a little, and turning towards me with a smile, looked at me as if he thanked me. This put me off again from what I was about remarking, and I was never more thankful in my life, than when I saw my friend Thomson coming in at the door to relieve me from my uneasy sensations. There was something very delightful in them too, notwithstanding; and when my friend introduced me to the stranger as an old and particular acquaintance of his, and I took his extended hand, we were better known to each other, than most of those who have lived next door neighbours for some dozen years.

It was quite time to join the club. My new acquaintance, Mr. Thornton, turning out to be a

member as well as my friend, we walked in sociably together.

In my next I hope to give you some account of the club. I make no introduction to my letters, as I intend doing as you desired,—that is, to give you some description of whatever I see here worth your attention, with such of my reflections as may chance to come up at the time.

Yours,

A. B.

*By Washington Allston*

## THE HYPOCHONDRIAC.

He would not taste, but swallow'd, life at once ;  
And scarce had reached his prime ere he had bolted,  
With all its garnish, mix'd of sweet and sour,  
Full fourscore years. For he, in truth, did wot not  
What most he crav'd, and so devour'd all ;  
Then, with his gasses, follow'd Indigestion,  
Making it food for Night-mares and their foals.

*Bridgen.*

It was the opinion of an ancient philosopher, that we can have no want for which Nature does not provide an appropriate gratification. As it regards our physical wants, this appears to be true. But there are moral cravings which extend beyond the world we live in ; and, were we in a heathen age, would serve us with an unanswerable argument for the immortality of the soul. That these cravings are felt by all there can be no doubt ; yet that all feel them in the same degree, would be as absurd to suppose, as that every man possesses equal sensibility or understanding. Boswell's desires, from his own account, seem to

have been limited to reading Shakspeare in the other world, whether with, or without his commentators, he has left us to guess; and Newton probably pined for the sight of those distant stars whose light has not yet reached us. What originally was the particular craving of my own mind I cannot now recal; but that I had, even in my boyish days, an insatiable desire after something which always eluded me I well remember. As I grew into manhood my desires became less definite; and by the time I had passed through College they seemed to have resolved themselves into a general passion for *doing*.

It is needless to enumerate the different subjects which one after another engaged me—Mathematics, metaphysics, natural and moral philosophy were each begun, and each in turn given up in a passion of love and disgust.

It is the fate of all inordinate passions to meet their extremes; so was it with mine. Could I have pursued any of these studies with moderation, I might have been to this day, perhaps, both learned and happy. But I could be moderate in nothing. Not content with being employed, I must always be *busy*; and business, as every one knows, if long continued, must end in fatigue,

and fatigue in disgust, and disgust in change, if that be practicable—which unfortunately was my case.

The restlessness occasioned by these half-finished studies brought on a severe fit of self-examination. Why is it, I asked myself, that these learned works, which have each furnished their authors with sufficient excitement to effect their completion, should thus weary me before I get midway into them? It is plain enough. As a reader I am merely a recipient, but the composer is an active agent; a vast difference! And now I can account for the singular pleasure which a certain bad poet of my acquaintance always took in inflicting his verses on every one who would listen to him; each perusal being but a sort of mental echo of the original bliss of composition. I will set about writing immediately.

Having time out of mind heard the epithet great coupled with Historians, it was that, I believe, inclined me to write a history. I chose my subject, and began collating, and transcribing, night and day, as if I had not another hour to live; and on I went with the industry of a steam-engine; when it one day occurred to me, that, though I had been labouring for months, I had

not yet had occasion for one original thought.—Pshaw! said I, 'tis only making new clothes out of old ones. I will have nothing more to do with history.

As it is natural for a mind suddenly disgusted with mechanic toil, to seek relief from its opposite, it can easily be imagined that my next resource was Poetry. Every one rhymes now-a-days, and so can I. Shall I write an Epic, or a Tragedy, or a Metrical Romance? Epics are out of fashion; even Homer and Virgil would hardly be read in our time, but that people are unwilling to admit their schooling to have been thrown away. As to Tragedy, I am a modern, and it is a settled thing that no modern *can* write a Tragedy; so I must not attempt that. Then for Metrical Romances—why, they are now manufactured; and, as the Edinburgh Review says, may be “imported” by us “in bales.” I will bind myself to no particular class, but give free play to my imagination. With this resolution I went to bed, as one going to be inspired. The morning came; I ate my breakfast, threw up the window, and placed myself in my elbowchair before it. An hour passed, and nothing occurred to me. But this I ascribed to a fit of laughter



very probable  
imagination
 that seized me, at seeing a duck made drunk by eating rum cherries. I turned my back on the window. Another hour followed, then another, and another: I was still as far from poetry as ever; every object about me seemed bent against my abstraction; the card-racks fascinating me like serpents, and compelling me to read, as if I would get them by heart, Dr. Joblin, Mr. Camberback, Mr. Milton Bull, &c. &c. I took up my pen, drew a sheet of paper from my writing desk, and fixed my eyes upon that;—'twas all in vain; I saw nothing on it but the watermark, *D. Ames*. I laid down the pen, closed my eyes, and threw my head back in the chair. "Are you waiting to be shaved, Sir?" said a familiar voice. I started up, and overturned my servant. "No, blockhead!"—"I am waiting to be inspired"—but this I added mentally. What is the cause of my difficulty? said I. Something within me seemed to reply, in the words of Lear, "nothing comes of nothing." Then I must seek a subject. I ran over a dozen in a few minutes, chose one after another, and, though twenty thoughts very readily occurred on each, I was fain obliged to reject them all; some for wanting pith, some for belonging to prose, and others for having been

worn out in the service of other poets. In a word, my eyes began to open on the truth, and I felt convinced that *that* only was poetry which a man writes because he cannot help writing; the irrepressible effluence of his secret being on every thing in sympathy with it—a kind of *flowering* of the soul amid the warmth and the light of nature. I am no poet, I exclaimed, and I will not disfigure Mr. Arnes with common-place verses.

I know not how I should have borne this second disappointment had not the title of a new Novel, which then came into my head, suggested a trial in that branch of letters. I will write a Novel. Having come to this determination, the next thing was to collect materials. They must be sought after, said I, for my late experiment has satisfied me that I might wait for ever in my elbowchair, and they would never come to me; they must be toiled for—not in books, if I would not deal in second-hand—but in the world, that inexhaustible storehouse of all kinds of originals. I then turned over in my mind the various characters I had met with in life; amongst these a few only seemed fitted for any story, and those rather as accessories; such as a politician who hated popularity; a sentimental grave-digger, and



a metaphysical rope-dancer; but for a hero, the grand nucleus of my fable, I was sorely at a loss. This, however, did not discourage me. I knew he might be found in the world, if I would only take the trouble to look for him. For this purpose I jumped into the first stagecoach that passed my door; it was immaterial whither bound, my object being men, not places. My first day's journey offered nothing better than a sailor who rebuked a member of Congress for swearing. But at the third stage, on the second day, as we were changing horses, I had the good fortune to light on a face which gave promise of all I wanted; it was so remarkable that I could not take my eyes from it; the forehead might have been called handsome but for a pair of enormous eye-bones that seemed to project from it like the quarter galleries of a ship, and beneath these were a couple of small, restless, grey eyes, which, glancing in every direction from under their shaggy brows, sparkled like the intermittent light of fire-flies; in the nose there was nothing remarkable, except that it was crested by a huge wart with a small grove of black hairs; but the mouth made ample amends, being altogether indescribable, for it was so variable in its expression, that I could not tell whether

it had most of the sardonic, the benevolent, or the sanguinary, appearing to exhibit them all in succession with equal vividness. My attention, however, was mainly fixed by the sanguinary; it came across me like an east wind, and I felt a cold sweat damping my linen; and when this was suddenly succeeded by the benevolent, I was sure I had got at the secret of his character—no less than that of a murderer haunted by remorse. Delighted with this discovery, I made up my mind to follow the owner of the face wherever he went till I should learn his history. I accordingly made an end of my journey for the present, upon learning that the stranger was to pass some time in the place where we stopped. For three days I made minute inquiries, but all I could gather was, that he had been a great traveller, though of what country no one could tell me. On the fourth day, finding him on the move, I took passage in the same coach. Now, said I, is my time of harvest. But I was mistaken; for in spite of all the lures which I threw out to draw him into a communicative humour, I could get nothing from him but monosyllables. So far from abating my ardour, this reserve only the more whetted my curiosity. At last we stopt at a pleasant village in New-

Jersey. Here he seemed a little better known ; the inn-keeper inquiring after his health, and the hostler asking, if the balls he had supplied him with fitted the barrels of his pistols. The latter inquiry I thought was accompanied by a significant glance, that indicated a knowledge on the hostler's part of more than met the ear ; I determined therefore to sound him. After a few general remarks, that had nothing to do with any thing, by way of introduction, I began by hinting some random surmises as to the use to which the stranger might have put the pistols he spoke of ; inquired whether he was in the habit of loading them at night, whether he slept with them under his pillow ; if he was in the practice of burning a light while he slept, and if he did not sometimes awake the family by groans, or by walking with agitated steps in his chamber. But it was all in vain, the man protesting that he never knew any thing ill of him. Perhaps, thought I, the hostler having overheard his midnight wanderings, and detected his crime, is paid for keeping the secret. I pumped the landlord, and the landlady, and the barmaid, and the chambermaid, and the waiters, and the cook, and every thing that could speak in the house ; still to no purpose, each ending his

reply with, "Lord, Sir, he's as honest a gentleman, for ought I know, as any in the world;" then would come a question—"but, perhaps, *you* know something of him yourself?" Whether my answer, though given in the negative, was uttered in such a tone as to imply an affirmative, thereby exciting suspicion, I cannot tell, but it is certain that I soon after perceived a visible change towards him in the deportment of the whole household. When he spoke to the waiters, their jaws fell, their fingers spread, their eyes rolled, with every symptom of involuntary action; and once when he asked the landlady to take a glass of wine with him, I saw her, under pretence of looking out of the window, throw it into the street; in short, the very scullion fled at his approach, and a chambermaid dared not enter his room unless under guard of a large mastiff. That these circumstances were not unobserved by him will appear by what follows.

Though I had come no nearer to facts, this general suspicion, added to the remarkable circumstance that no one had ever heard his name (being known only as *the gentleman*) gave every day new life to my hopes. He is the very man, said I; and I began to revel in all the luxury of

detection, when as I was one night undressing for bed, my attention was caught by the following letter on my table.

SIR,

If you are the gentleman you would be thought, you will not refuse satisfaction for the diabolical calumnies you have so unprovokedly circulated against an innocent man.

Your obedient servant,

TIMOLEON BUB.

P. S. I shall expect you at five o'clock to-morrow morning, at the three elms, by the river side.

This invitation, as may be well imagined, discomposed me not a little. Who Mr. Bub was, or in what way I had injured him, puzzled me exceedingly. Perhaps, thought I, he has mistaken me for another person; if so, my appearing on the ground will soon set matters right. With this persuasion I went to bed, somewhat calmer than I should otherwise have been; nay, I was even composed enough to divert myself with the folly of one bearing so vulgar an appellation tak-

ing it into his head to play the *man of honour*, and could not help a waggish feeling of curiosity to see if his name and person were in keeping.

I woke myself in the morning with a loud laugh, for I had dreamt of meeting, in the redoubtable Mr. Bub, a little pot-bellied man, with a round face, a red snub nose, and a pair of gooseberry wall-eyes. My fit of pleasantry was far from passed off when I came in sight of the fatal elms. I saw my antagonist pacing the ground with considerable violence. Ah! said I, he is trying to escape from his unheroic name! and I laughed again at the conceit; but as I drew a little nearer, there appeared a majestic altitude in his figure very unlike what I had seen in my dream, and my laugh began to stiffen into a kind of rigid grin. There now came upon me something very like a misgiving that the affair might turn out to be no joke. I felt an unaccountable wish that this Mr. Bub had never been born; still I advanced: but if an ærolite had fallen at my feet, I could not have been more startled, than when I found in the person of my challenger—the mysterious stranger. The consequences of my curiosity immediately rushed upon me, and I was no longer at a loss in what way I had injured

him. All my merriment seemed to curdle within me; and I felt like a dog that had got his head into a jug, and suddenly finds he cannot extricate it. "Well met, Sir," said the stranger; "now take your ground, and abide the consequences of your infernal insinuations." "Upon my word," replied I—"upon my honor, Sir," and there I stuck, for in truth I knew not what it was I was going to say; when the stranger's second advancing, exclaimed, in a voice which I immediately recognized, "Why, zounds! Rainbow, are *you* the man?"—"Is it you, Harman?"—"What!" continued he, "my old classmate Rainbow turned slanderer? impossible! Indeed, Mr. Bub, there must be some mistake here." "None, Sir," said the stranger; "I have it on the authority of my respectable landlord, that ever since this gentleman's arrival, he has been incessant in his attempts to blacken my character with every person at the inn." "Nay, my friend"—but I put an end to Harman's further defence of me, by taking him aside, and frankly confessing the whole truth. It was with some difficulty I could get through the explanation, being frequently interrupted with bursts of laughter from my auditor; which indeed I now began to think very natural. In a word,

to cut the story short, my friend having repeated the conference verbatim to Mr. Bub, he was good-natured enough to join in the mirth, saying, with one of his best sardonics, he "had always had a misgiving that his unlucky ugly face would one day or other be the death of somebody." Well, we passed the day together, and having cracked a social bottle after dinner, parted, I believe, as hearty friends as we should have been (which is saying a great deal) had he indeed proved the favorite villain in my Novel. But, alas! with the loss of my villain, away went the Novel.

Here again I was at a stand; and in vain did I torture my brains for another pursuit. But why should I seek one? In fortune I have a competence—why not be as independent in mind? There are thousands in the world whose sole object in life is to attain the means of living without toil; and what is any literary pursuit but a series of mental labour, ay, and oftentimes more wearying to the spirits than that of the body—upon the whole, I came to the conclusion, that it was a very foolish thing to do any thing. So I seriously set about trying to do nothing.

Well; what with whistling, hammering down



all the nails in the house that had started, paring my nails, pulling my fire to pieces and rebuilding it, changing my clothes to full dress, though I dined alone, trying to make out the figure of a Cupid on my discoloured ceiling, and thinking of a lady I had not thought of for ten years before, I got along the first week tolerably well. But by the middle of the second week—'twas horrible! the hours seemed to roll over me like mill-stones. When I awoke in the morning I felt like an Indian devotee, the day coming upon me like the great Temple of Juggernaut; cracking of my bones beginning after breakfast; and if I had any respite, it was seldom for more than half an hour, when a newspaper seemed to stop the wheels;—then away they went, crack, crack, noon and afternoon, 'till I found myself by night reduced to a perfect jelly—good for nothing but to be ladled into bed, with a greater horror than ever at the thought of sunrise.

This will never do, said I; a toad in the heart of a tree lives a more comfortable life than a nothing-doing man; and I began to perceive a very deep meaning in the truism of "something being better than nothing." But is a precise object always necessary to the mind? No: if it be

but occupied, no matter with what. That may easily be done. I have already tried the sciences, and made abortive attempts in literature, but I have never yet tried what is called general reading;—that, thank heaven, is a resource inexhaustible. I will henceforth read only for amusement. My first experiment in this way was on Voyages and Travels, with occasional dippings into Shipwrecks, Murders, and Ghost-stories: it succeeded beyond my hopes; month after month passing away like days, and as for days—I almost fancied that I could see the sun move. How comfortable, thought I, thus to travel over the world in my closet! how delightful to double Cape Horn and cross the African Desert in my rocking-chair; to traverse Caffraria and the Mogul's dominions in the same pleasant vehicle! this is living to some purpose; one day dining on barbacued pigs in Otaheite; the next in danger of perishing amidst the snows of Terra del Fuego; then to have a lion cross my path in the heart of Africa; to run for my life from a wounded rhinoceros, and sit, by mistake on a sleeping boa-constrictor:—this, this, said I, is life! Even the dangers of the sea were but healthful stimulants. If I met with a tornado, it

was only an agreeable variety; water-spouts and ice-islands gave me no manner of alarm: and I have seldom been more composed than when catching a whale. In short, the ease with which I thus circumnavigated the globe, and conversed with all its varieties of inhabitants, expanded my benevolence; I found every place, and every body in it, even to the Hottentots, vastly agreeable. But, alas! I was doomed to discover that this could not last for ever. Though I was still curious, there were no longer curiosities; for the world is limited, and new countries, and new people, like every thing else, wax stale on acquaintance; even ghosts and hurricanes become at last familiar; and books grow old like those who read them.

I was now at what sailors call a dead lift; being too old to build castles for the future, and too dissatisfied with the life I had led to look back on the past. In this state of mind, I bought me a snuffbox; for as I could not honestly recommend my disjointed self to any decent woman, it seemed a kind of duty in me to contract such habits as would effectually prevent my taking in the lady I had once thought of. I set-to snuffing away till I made my nose sore, and lost my appetite. I then threw my snuffbox into the fire,

and took to cigars. This change appeared to revive me. For a short time I thought myself in Elysium, and wondered I had never tried them before. Thou fragrant weed! oh, that I were a Dutch poet, I exclaimed, that I might render due honour to thy unspeakable virtues! Ineffable tobacco! Every puff seemed like oil poured upon troubled waters, and I felt an inexpressible calmness stealing over my frame; in truth, it seemed like a benevolent spirit reconciling my soul to my body. But moderation, as I have before said, was never one of my virtues. I walked my room pouring out volumes like a moving glass-house. My apartment was soon filled with smoke; I looked in the glass and hardly knew myself, my eyes peering at me through the curling atmosphere, like those of a poodle: I then retired to the opposite end, and surveyed the furniture; nothing retained its original form or position;—the tables and chairs seemed to loom from the floor, and my grandfather's picture to thrust forward its nose like a French-horn, while that of my grandmother, who was reckoned a beauty in her day, looked, in her hoop, like her husband's wig-block stuck on a tub. Whether this was a signal for the fiends within me to begin their operations I know

not; but from the day I began to be what is called nervous. The uninterrupted health I had hitherto enjoyed now seemed the greatest curse that could have befallen me. I had never had the usual itinerant distempers; it was very unlikely that I should always escape them; and the dread of their coming upon me in my advanced age made me perfectly miserable. I scarcely dared to stir abroad; had sand-bags put to my doors to keep out the meazles; forbade my neighbours' children playing in my yard to avoid the whooping-cough; and to prevent infection from the small-pox, I ordered all my male servants' heads to be shaved; made the coachman and footman wear tow wigs, and had them both regularly smoked whenever they returned from the neighbouring town, before they were allowed to enter my presence. Nor were these all my miseries; in fact, they were but a sort of running base to a thousand other strange and frightful fancies; the mere skeleton to a whole body-corporate of horrors. I became dreamy, was haunted by what I had read, frequently finding a Hottentot, or a boa-constrictor, in my bed. Sometimes I fancied myself buried in one of the pyramids of Egypt, breaking my shins against the bones of a sacred

cow. Then I thought myself a kangaroo, unable to move, because somebody had cut off my tail.

In this miserable state I one evening rushed out of my house. I know not how far, or how long, I had been from home, when, hearing a well-known voice, I suddenly stopped: it seemed to belong to a face that I knew; yet how I should know it somewhat puzzled me, being then fully persuaded that I was a Chinese Josh. My friend (as I afterwards learned he was) invited me to go to his club. This, thought I, is one of my worshippers, and they have a right to carry me wherever they please; accordingly I suffered myself to be led.

I soon found myself in an American tavern, and in the midst of a dozen grave gentlemen who were emptying a large bowl of punch: they each saluted me, some calling me by name, others saying they were happy to make my acquaintance; but what appeared quite unaccountable was my not only understanding their language, but knowing it to be English. A kind of reaction now began to take place in my brain. Perhaps, said I, I am not a Josh. I was urged to pledge my

friend in a glass of punch; I did so; my friend's friend, and his friend, and all the rest, in succession, begged to have the same honour; I complied—again—and again, till at last, the punch having fairly turned my head topsyturvy, righted my understanding; and I found myself *myself*.

This happy change gave a pleasant fillip to my spirits. I returned home, found no monster in my bed, and slept quietly till near noon the next day. I arose with a slight head-ach and a great admiration of punch; resolving, if I did not catch the meazles from my late adventure, to make a second visit to the club. No symptoms appearing, I went again, and my reception was such as led to a third, and a fourth, and fifth visit, when I became a regular member. I believe my inducement to this was a certain unintelligible something in three or four of my new associates, which, at once gratified and kept alive my curiosity, in their letting out just enough of themselves while I was with them to excite me when alone to speculate on what was kept back. I wondered I had never met with such characters in books; and the kind of interest they awakened began gradually to widen to others. Henceforth I will live

in the world, said I; 'tis my only remedy: a man's own affairs are soon conned; he gets them by heart till they haunt him when he would be rid of them; but those of another can be known only in part, while that which remains unrevealed is a never-ending stimulus to curiosity. The only natural mode therefore of preventing the mind preying on itself—the only rational, because the only interminable employment is to be busy about other people's business.

The variety of objects which this new course of life each day presented, brought me at length to a state of sanity; at least, I was no longer disposed to conjure up remote dangers to my door, or chew the cud on my indigested past reading; though sometimes, I confess, when I have been tempted to meddle with a very bad character, I have invariably been threatened with a relapse; which leads me to think the existence of some secret affinity between rogues and boa-constrictors is not unlikely. In a short time, however, I had every reason to believe myself completely cured; for the days began to appear of their natural length, and I no longer saw every thing through a pair of blue spectacles, but found nature diversified by a thousand beautiful colours, and the



people about me a thousand times more interesting than hyænas or hottentots. The world is now my only study, and I trust I shall stick to it for the sake of my health.

## POETRY.

POETRY.

### GREEN RIVER.

When breezes are soft, and skies are fair,  
I steal an hour from study and care,  
And hie me away to the woodland scene,  
Where wanders the stream with waters of green,  
As if the bright fringe of herbs on its brink  
Had given their stain to the wave they drink.  
And they, whose meadows it murmurs through,  
Have named the stream from its own fair hue.

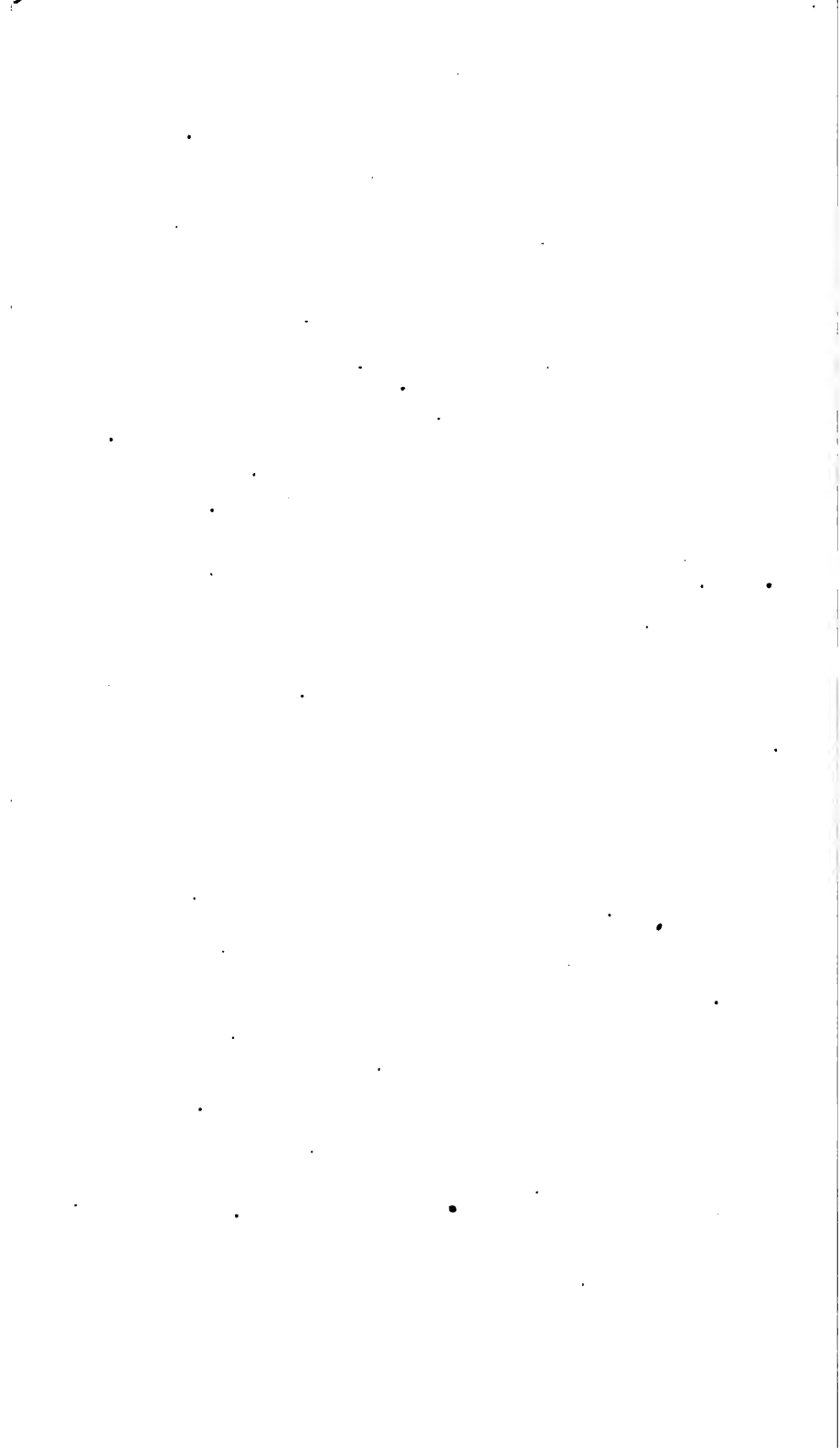
Yet pure its waters, its shallows are bright  
With coloured pebbles, and sparkles of light,  
And clear the depths where the eddies play,  
And dimples deepen and whirl away;  
And the plane-tree's speckled arms o'ershoot  
The swifter current that mines its root;  
Through whose shifting leaves, as you walk the hill,  
The quivering glimmer of sun and rill  
With a sudden flash on the eye is thrown,  
Like the ray that streams from the diamond stone.  
Oh, loveliest there the spring days come,  
With blossoms, and birds, and wild bees' hum;

The flowers of summer are fairest there,  
 And freshest the breath of the summer air,  
 And the swimmer comes, in the season of heat  
 To bathe in those waters so pure and sweet.

Yet, fair as thou art, thou shunn'st to glide,  
 Beautiful stream! by the village side,  
 But windest away from haunts of men,  
 To silent valley, and shaded glen.  
 And forest, and meadow, and slope of hill,  
 Around thee, are lonely, lovely, and still.  
 Lonely—save when, by thy rippling tides,  
 From thicket to thicket the angler glides;  
 Or the simpler comes, with basket and book,  
 For herbs of power on thy banks to look;  
 Or haply some idle dreamer like me,  
 To wander, and muse, and gaze on thee.  
 Still—save the chirp of birds that feed  
 On the river cherry and seedy reed;  
 And thy own wild music, gushing out  
 With mellow murmur, or fairy shout,  
 From dawn to the blush of another day,  
 Like traveller singing along his way.

That fairy music I never hear,  
 Nor gaze on those waters so green and clear;  
 And mark them winding away from sight,  
 Darkened with shade, or flashing with light,  
 While o'er thee, the vine to its thicket clings,  
 And the zephyr stoops to freshen his wings;—

But I wish that fate had left me free  
To wander these quiet haunts with thee,  
Till the eating cares of earth should depart,  
And the peace of the scene pass into my heart;  
And I envy thy stream as it glides along  
Through its beautiful banks, in a trance of song.  
Though forced to drudge for the dregs of men,  
And scrawl strange words with the barbarous pen,  
And mingle among the jostling crowd,  
Where the sons of strife are subtle and loud;  
I sometimes come to this quiet place,  
To breathe the air that ruffles thy face,  
And gaze upon thee in silent dream;  
For, in thy lonely and lovely stream,  
An image of that calm life appears  
That won my heart in my greener years.



THE  
**IDLE MAN.**

No. III.

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How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle. *Cowper.*

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NEW-YORK:  
WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.

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1821.

*Southern District of New York, ss.*

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The Idle Man.

How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle.

*Cowper.*

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G. L. THOMPSON,  
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

## EDWARD AND MARY.

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"Oh, how this spring of love resembleth  
The uncertain glory of an April day:  
Which now shews all the beauty of the sun,  
And by and by a cloud takes all away:"

—"why, man, she is mine own;  
And I as rich, in having such a jewel,  
As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl,  
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold."  
*Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

To love deeply and to believe our love returned and yet to be sensible that we should not make our love known, is one of the hardest trials a man can undergo. It asks more of us because the passion is the most secret in our natures. All sympathy is distasteful except that of one being, and that, in such a case, we must deny ourselves. In our sorrow at the loss of friends, if we shun direct and proffered consolations, we love the assuaging which another's pity administers to us in the gentle tones, mild manners, kind looks, and nameless little notices which happen in the



numberless affairs of daily life. But the man that loves and is unhappy, starts at a soothing voice 'as if he were betrayed; eyes turned in affectionate regard upon him enter his heart like a sword; his way is not in the path of other men, and his misery must be borne unseen and alone.

This severance from the world, this desertion of all intercourse with man, gives a bitterness to grief greater than any evil life takes of, and yet here we drink it of ourselves; we make our own solitude, root up the flowers in it, and watch them as they wither; we lay it bare of all beauty and make it empty of life, and then feel as if others had spoiled us and left us to perish. Relief from troubles may be found in society and employments; but unprosperous love goes every where with a man; his thoughts are forever upon it; it is in him and around him like the air; it breaks his night-rest, and causes him to hide his head from the morning light. The music of the open sky sings a dirge over his joys, and the strong trees of the forest droop over the grave of all he held dear.

Thwarted love is more romantic than even that which is blessed; the imagination grows forgetive, and the mind idles in its melancholy

amongst fantastic shapes ; all it hears or sees is turned to its own uses, taking new forms and new relations every moment, and multiplying without end. It wanders off amongst its own creations ; they crowd thicker round it the farther it goes, till at last it loses sight of the world, and becomes bewildered in the many and uneven paths it had trodden out for itself.

EDWARD SHIRLEY was of a grave, thoughtful cast of character, much absorbed in his own feelings, yet with a strong affection for the few whom his reserve and what some would call his prejudices allowed him to take as intimates. He had read so much of wrong, and had learned to think that there was so little of true delicacy and deep and enduring love amongst men to answer to what he felt within himself, that he was sensible of something like a distaste of the world at large. This was a cause not of triumph, but of melancholy to him, and an expression of mild delight was visible in his countenance whenever he saw at his father's a stranger of an open and benevolent aspect. His feelings were apt to fasten upon things which could not break upon the train of his silent thoughts, and they grew more and more into an attachment to inanimate

objects and brutes. He was forever in the fields; the beauties of nature made his chief delight; he was open to their purifying influences, and the innocence which God seemed to have stamped upon all of them, was almost religion to him.

But we are made for other purposes than to have our interests begin and end in these; and he who has let his affections grow where the brooks run and the buds are opening to the warm sun, will find at last that the love of some human being will twine the closer because of it about his heart, and other joys and sorrows than those he had fostered under the blue sky, enter the deeper into his soul.

It has been said that no man of genius or sentiment ever lived to twenty years, without being in love. It is in some sense true; for if he does not find a living idol, he will make one to himself, and be a constant and fervent worshipper of that. When Edward was asked how it happened that such a romantic youth as he had never been in love, he answered, "I have been so, and for a long time, but my mistress is here, in the brain, and it is the only one I shall ever make knee to; for," he added, "the only woman that I could love must come so nigh in all high qualities to

her who lives in my imagination, that did she really live, she would look down upon such a worthless thing as I am. So, as for women, I think not of them." This he said with a smile, but his heart was heavy, for as he grew into life he felt an inanity, and his affections craved strongly something more. As he patted the head of his brother's boy, he said to himself, "am I never to be a father, and shall I die and leave no child to bless me? Shall I go out of the world, and shall no one of all the living feel a peculiar grief for me?"

The time was near at hand when Edward was to learn that real love was a more serious thing than that of the imagination. Mrs. Aston had lately taken possession of a small house near his father's. Just income enough to support her and her daughter Mary, in a simple and comfortable manner, was all Mr. Aston left. He was the son of a gentleman of good estate, but with a great number of children. He married young, and with no definite views of the means of supporting a family. He had been used to elegance and plenty at home, and, like most young men, never once considered how small a share a division of his father's property would leave to him. So long

as his father lived, he got along tolerably well ; but not many years after old Mr. Aston's death, the son found his estate fast diminishing, while he had a wife and children to support. Being little acquainted with the world, his plans were badly laid and worse managed ; poverty was creeping in upon him, not rapidly, but as surely and as the sea sometimes gains upon the shore, his spirits began forsaking him almost as fast as his intimates and friends. Though he had placed his happiness upon society at large, he was himself by its opinions, yet remembering that he was taken with present neglect, went on with the thought of his wife and children, and what awaited them. He brooded over immediate necessities, till a dull, changeless gloom gathered upon his mind, and his faculties seemed falling into an uneasy sleep. He was roused from this state of torpor time by the last feeble and irregular efforts of his worn-out nature. As he sat in the easy chair a few days before his death, there was a liveliness in his voice and manner, and a certain composure in his countenance, as if the idea of the world to which he was going, had entered

into his soul. As his wife gave him his cordial, —“heaven seems to have ordained it in mercy to those we love,” he said, looking up in her face, “that we should need their care so much, and ask of them so many attentions in our last hours. It breaks the thought that would otherwise fasten wholly on the loss they must soon bear, and their affliction is a little soothed so long as they administer good and ease to those of us who are about to die. And I feel,” he added, “how much, as the last and true tokens of love, they take from the bitterness of the separation which death makes sooner or later between us all.”

“Why do you talk thus, Alfred?” said his wife. “You have been much stronger for two days past. Hopes of better years than those gone, will be medicine to you. And why should you not hope? A change may come for you as well as others; and those who knew your father may do a kind office to his son, be it but in honour of his memory.”

“There is but one change for me, my love,” replied he gravely, “and as to the dead,” he added with a forced smile, “their good deeds go out of the memory of this world as surely as they enter into another. The concerns of the

world are ever shifting—its interests and relations ; and he who was in regard yesterday, will not be thought of tomorrow. But though there is too much of forgetfulness and selfishness amongst men, I would not blame them now, nor question the providence of God, which out of this evil brings good by making men active and considerate of ends. Let me rather take blame to myself ; for though it may be from a defect of nature in me, and not from any want of disposition or endeavour, that my condition in life has been a hard one, yet I might have known my weakness, and have avoided a responsibility I could not answer. To love you as I have done from the time I first saw you to this my last hour, was surely no crime ; my error was in shutting my eyes upon what it was leading us to. The suffering I have undergone, I hope, will be some atonement for my fault.”

“My children,” said he, turning towards his son and daughter, “beware that the ingenuity of men does not lead you to act against what you feel to be a virtuous impulse, for there is almost as much error of the head as of the heart in man. At the same time, do not trust wholly to what seem innocent impulses, especially when they

fall in with your desires, for what is in itself innocent may become evil from the relation it may hold to others ; so that it is not enough to consider it abstractly, but to cast about and ask yourselves what may be its effect in new connexions now and in future. Guide in this way your virtues by your wisdom, and you will have much of deep enjoyment now, and little to repent of hereafter."

Though this was a scene of severe grief, (for Mr. Aston was loved by his wife and children with an ardour and sincerity which few deserve or enjoy,) yet the composure of his manner tranquillized them, and their tears fell in silence.

"I have talked too much, and must lie down." They helped him to his bed. He soon fell into a gentle sleep, with his wife's hand in his, and never waked again.

As soon as the painful concerns following Mr. Aston's death were finished, his widow moved to the house I have mentioned, and which belonged to a penurious brother, who thought the world would look hard upon him, were she left without a shelter. He took her son into his counting-house ; for being a lad of quick parts, he would more than repay the obligation by his services,



besides giving his uncle an opportunity of appearing to do a deed of charity.

The house they moved to was not without its recollections to Mary's mother. She had been often in it when a child, and had frequently met Mr. Aston there when he was a cheerful young man. Entering a dwelling in which we had lived many years ago, brings together the past and present with a distinctness nothing else can. It is always with some tinge of melancholy, even to those who have prospered in the world; for let it have gone with us as well as it may, more of disappointments and troubles, than of pleasures, occur to us at such a time; and those pleasures which are remembered as having happened in the place we stand in, are thought of, not as so many which we had enjoyed, but as so many lost to us forever. The trial was a hard one indeed to Mrs. Aston. When left alone, and when the events and feelings of many years came altogether to her mind, in the agony of nature she uttered a loud and sorrowful cry. She had lived to see all her full hopes blasted; the misery of anxiety had mingled with her love, and the man who had made, as it were, her existence, and who might, she thought, have

led a happy life had he never known her, had died of a broken heart.—“I could have borne your death, Alfred, had some common sickness taken you from me. I could have lived for our children, and the memory of you would have been an angel of comfort to me. But to know that a wasting sorrow of the mind made life comfortless to you who had a heart for its best joys, and cut you so soon off;—how can I bear it! O, look down upon me, and teach me how!

Mary's affectionate manners and constant kind attentions, at last touched her mother's heart, roused her from her abstracted grief, and made her once more sensible that there was a living being for her to love, and for whom she had many duties to fulfil.

“Have you seen your new neighbours?” said Harriet Shirley to her brother.

“They were at Church last Sunday, but so veiled that I could not see their faces. To tell you the truth, I should hardly dare see the daughter's. Her form is the finest I ever beheld; and I am sure there was never so much beauty of movement without a mind answering to it.”

—Potty's son.

Are not you morally a fool? — said old Potty.

"There's a scrap of your theory again. Upon my word, Edward, you will go mad in love theoretically."

"I am half afraid of it myself, for in my walks I have seen her more than once floating before me in the sunbeams."

"A shame on you! You a lover? Why didn't you say, in the moonlight, with her cheek on her lily hand, looking as sad as Liberty at the tomb of Washington? Now don't give me that look of grave reproof. If I do trifle out of season, it is not that I do not feel."

"Heedlessness often causes as much pain as bad intention, Harriet; and think of it as you may, will more or less harden the heart of those who are guilty of it. I know you are a good girl, for all your rattle, and much better than you seem. But there is no need, child, of playing the 'hypocrite reversed,' when there are hardly examples enough of goodness to keep virtue in countenance."

"You are right, Edward, you are always right; and I will try to follow your advice; but you must first follow mine. I am a generous hearted girl, and will give it you without asking. By a mere glimpse of this Miss Aston, she has

gotten into your imagination ; and unless in good time you see something more of what you would call the humdrum reality, you will be so far gone in love shortly, that when you do at last meet with her, you will be lost, to a certainty. So, before it is too late, come along with me, and rid yourself of this fairy vision."

They turned up the narrow grassy lane which led to Mrs. Aston's house. It was bounded by an old irregular stone-wall, over which ran a few straggling wild vines, while the setting sun was pouring its rich light upon the yellow, green, and stone-coloured moss which coated over the wall. The branches of the cedars, under which they were walking, lifted and fell with a fanning motion to the night breeze, and here and there a bird was singing her farewell to the sun, as she swung upon them. Following a turn in the lane brought them immediately before the house. It was an old structure, projecting in front over the basement story, and running up from the coving into three sharp triangles, looking as bold and fantastic as the general officers in the prints of the Duke of Marlborough's battles. Edward felt as much reverence for the edifice, as he would have done for one of those

venerable old gentlemen of Queen Anne's time, had he made his appearance.

Mary Aston did not see them, as she was intent upon training up a honey-suckle to one of the carved urns pendent from the projection of the house. Edward stopped to watch for a moment her delicate white fingers, as they moved amongst the leaves and flowers. Her mother was sitting in the porch, with her eyes fixed upon the shaggy house-dog, which was once her husband's. The dog was lying upon the step with his neck stretched out over the door-sill, and resting partly on his mistress' feet. He was the first to notice the visitors. He turned round his head, got up and shook himself very deliberately, and then looked up in his mistress' face, as if asking how he was to receive the new comers.

"Mary," said her mother, rising.—Mary looked round, and then came forward a little. Harriet introduced herself and brother with her wonted easy cheerfulness, tempered by the situation of the strangers. She apologized for having put off her call so long, by saying it was from the hope that her mother would before then have been well enough to have accompanied her.

"I heard that your mother was not well; and do not know but that I should have waved ceremony, and called in to see her when walking out with Mary some evening. For I remember having met her in this very house; and I believe we liked each other well at the time. And there are so few early connexions left to us late in life, that I should not willingly give up those I could retain." This was a general reflection, but brought with it the remembrance of her husband; and the struggle to overcome her feelings showed itself in her countenance.

"Will you walk into the house," said Mary to Harriet and her brother, "or should you like better a seat here in the open air this bright evening?" "For my part," said Edward, taking hold of the broken string which the honey-suckle had wound round, "as I have interrupted you in your work, I will now help you finish it, if you will permit me." There was a delicate respect in Edward's manner, which gave an air of kindness and attention to what in others would have looked like mere officiousness. Besides, he had a tact for character, which kept him from any show of sudden intimacy, where it would not be understood and frankly received. It is said

that sagacious dogs possess the same quality. It was certainly so with Argus; for what with his fawning, and the fair hands of Mary kindly saving the plant from harm, Edward scarce knew what he was about. He began with tying the bow of the knot first—it slipt, and the vine fell upon Mary's arms. This was not making the matter any better, and in the second attempt the knot was tied in the wrong place.

"The dog is troublesome," said Mary, simply. "Get you out of the way, Argus."

"'Tis all my awkwardness, Miss Aston. You must not drive Argus away. It makes me better pleased with myself to be liked ~~by~~ a dog; and Argus seems to take to me so much that I hope," he said hesitatingly, "he and I shall soon be friends. I will not blunder so again."—The knot was tied, and so was one which Edward could never undo all his life after.

What little things falling in with our dispositions determine the course of our affections. The liking of an old family house-dog, acting with a first impression, did more to fix Edward in favor with Mrs. Aston and her daughter, than any one of the party was aware of.

“What has my brother been about? Why, I declare, Miss Aston, you will make a very florist of him. At home, he never thinks of moving one of my plants into the sun for me of a cold day. He scarcely looks at them; and says that he had almost as lief be shut up in a room full of stuffed birds, as in one so stuck round with flower-pots. He will bring home a pocket full of mosses, and some poor little field-flower now and then, to be sure, but if I ask the name of one of them, it is something that he learned, when a lad, of some ploughboy,—for he knows not one word of Smith or Bigelow.”

“You forget my woodbine, Harriet, under my study window.”

“Why, so I did; though if I chose to deny that you had one, nobody would believe you, after such bungling work as you made with Miss Aston’s just now. Now I think on’t, you have nursed yours in that particular place, merely because when you were young and foolish enough to believe the story of little Jack and the bean, you stole half a dozen green ones from the cook, and planted them there to see if you couldn’t climb up to the moon, as well as Jack. So there it stands a remembrancer of unsuspect-



ing, youthful innocence, and a memento of early hopes disappointed."

"Do you run all your friends in this way," said Mary, "or has your brother good-naturedly consented that you should exercise your wits upon him, that you may spare your other friends? I hope there is some such compact between you, else I must always be upon my guard with you."

"As to a compact, Miss Aston, you will know all about that one of these days. I've no doubt your sagacity will find it out soon enough for me. In the mean time, I would advise you to go on independent of my foolish humour; for, be assured, however like paradox it may look, nothing so lays people open as aiming to act always upon their good behaviour."

"You speak with a wit's confidence, Miss Shirley, but as your observation sorts well with my judgment, I'll e'en follow it. And if my heedlessness brings down your ridicule upon me, I shall, at any rate, have one to help me bear it," said she, slightly colouring, and dropping her lids as her eyes met those of Edward, turned with a serious earnestness upon her.

How hard it is at certain times, when we are most in need of it too, to find something to say!—except to the practised, who are never tortured by embarrassment, and never wanting to themselves. Harriet had moved forward to speak a word or two to Mrs. Aston, and Mary and Edward remained together feeling sufficiently awkward, and all the while conscious that the embarrassment of each was known to the other.

We are forever searching after great and marked causes for important events, and cannot be content to let our deepest and strongest feelings come from the small, unnoticed incidents of life. Yet an unthought of word dropped in discourse, the voice that utters it, or the momentary look that goes with it, oftentimes thrills us more, and enters with a more quickening sense into our hearts, than all the purposed and well ordered terms of rhetoric. To those who have something which makes them kindred to one another, these are beautiful revelations of each others nature. Delicate and according minds hold intelligent discourse in half uttered words, and shifting movements, and passing expressions of the face. It is like the imagined intercourse of angels, whose thoughts and feelings are interchanged by

strange and wonderful sympathies, and need no tongue to speak them. It is so in early love with those whose characters are in agreement. And in the present case there was little want of a formal declaration. Not that Edward or Mary entered into a self-examination of their hearts; but a peculiar delight was felt by each for the first time, and life seemed a new existence to them.

“It is a fortunate thing for me,” said Edward at last, “that I have a multitude of foolish things about me, for my sister to make amusement out of. She would scarce care a jot for me were I a piece of perfection. She says that she cannot away with those proper folks who never commit themselves.”

“Her interest in the world will not be likely to lessen, if it measures itself by people’s follies,” said Mary.

“What *she* are you talking about?” said Harriet, turning round. “Are you putting your heads together to make mutual defence and secret alliance against my declared hostility? Come, I must break this up in good time. Your mother is going into the house, Miss Aston, for it is growing chilly. And don’t you see the mist

wreathing up along the meadow yonder, like the cigar-smoke which my brother's sprightly companions let out by mouthsful on the green woollen table-cloth after dinner?"

"It will do no more harm to-night than their smoke, Harriet, for the moon is rising betimes to keep it down in the lowlands; and if you will ask Miss Aston to walk to the end of the lane with you, I will insure her a walk back safe of all colds."

"I hardly know whether I shall ask her," said Harriet, at the same time taking her arm within her own and walking on, "for you must know, Miss Aston, that my brother, though he generally avoids our sex, yet, when caught amongst them, is one of the most scrupulously polite gentlemen in the world. Now only think of his situation when we reach the end of the lane! How shocking to see you returning by the dark, giant trunks of all these trees, and without a protector! And yet it would never do to leave me to foot it home alone, though I am his sister. Depend upon it, we should both have to leave him in his difficulty, and I dare say he might be found standing there at any hour of the night,

all in the moonshine, like a gate-post new set to support an old one."

"Your imagined difficulty is all over now, Miss Shirley, for here comes one who has been my brave gallant this many a day," said Mary, patting Argus on the head as he made up to her side. "I have half a mind to turn you off with him and ask Mr. Shirley to wait upon me, to punish you for all you have said to-night."

"That would hardly be fair, Miss Aston. My sister's ridicule might hurt the poor fellow's feelings, and, though very sagacious, the odds might be against him at an encounter of wits."

They soon reached the gateway with one common and blending sense of happiness.

From the air of politicians, it must be a mighty easy matter to see into the causes of all the great changes in the world. There is scarce a word of truth in all they say, let them talk about it ever so plausibly. From your intangible, theoretic German, down to your mere matter-of-fact man, who dates Buonaparte's overthrow from the rise of sugars in France, they are all wrong. The causes assigned by each may have a share in what is done. So we may cut a twig, and set it in the ground, and keep the earth loose

about it, and in a few years what diminutive things we look like under its long, cool branches! Its growth is as hidden as it is silent, and when it lays itself out upon the air a beautiful mystery, with its web of glossy leaves interwoven with golden sunshine, do we look up into it with any other feeling than that of glad worship? And yet we know more of its origin, and had more to do with making it what it now is, than we have part or knowledge in a tythe of what we decide on so familiarly.

If outward and noted events keep us so in ignorance of their nature, what are we to do with the subtile movements of the mind? They are quick or slow, they agitate us violently or are scarcely felt, hurry us suddenly forward after what we a little before followed sluggishly and at intervals, or turn us about in pursuit of that which we had passed by with indifference; and all from causes so strange or so hidden, that we cannot comprehend them, nor search them out.

Edward within an hour or two had passed through some of the most simple and ordinary events that take place in our common intercourse; yet he had come out of them altogether changed. He who had looked with an idle eye,

and with an estranged mind upon what was the concern of others, in an instant found his whole being swallowed up in that of another.—“How gross is every thing else on earth,” said he to himself, “compared with the beautiful refinement of a woman!” And how monotonous and tame and indistinct was the being of his imagination at that moment, compared to Mary Aston!

After walking home in silence with his sister, he continued rambling about. The house was too close and confined for him. There was a quick and warm pulsation through him, and his whole frame was expanding and beating with new life. Beautiful images of the brain were coming and going fast and bright as the light, and all things that drank the moist night air and slept under the moon, or shone and moved beneath it, gave him a new delight, and he loved them more than ever. He was not sensible how far he had wandered, till the low, broad chimney of Mrs. Aston’s house met his eye as it stood out in strong and sharp relief against the moonlight. Though alone, the colour rose in his cheek, and he felt a fluttering at his heart. His whole soul was in a moment laid open to him. What he had not been conscious of as being any

thing more than one of those bright and hopeful moments which visit us sometimes, we know not why, when "an unaccustomed spirit lifts us above the ground with happy thoughts," he now found to be one of the most serious circumstances that can happen to a man of sentiment ; and he was forced to acknowledge to himself that he was in love.

Almost all men at some time or other are carried out of their course by influences that act upon them, with the power and silence of the currents of the ocean, and ignorant how to keep their reckoning or careless about it, the bigger part are wrecked. Edward found that he had been swept along without knowing it. Still all was so beautiful, he did not consider whither it was carrying him, for the clouds and jutting rocks and islands with all their trees upon them, "glassed themselves" in the sea, and made a fairy show for him to gaze down upon.

He drew near the house. As he moved along under the thousand branches of the large trees, their noise over his head was like that of the surf. There was something ominous and wizard-like in the confused and wild multitude of their motions and sounds, and a melancholy fore-



boding crossed his mind like the shadow of a cloud. As he passed out from underneath their shade, his cheerfulness returned ; and as he looked towards the dwelling of Mary Aston, he felt a blessing on him. The uncouth variety and conceit in the old building looked more grotesque than before, in the moonlight, and the shadows of the odd peaks and projections, falling at random upon it, seemed like the fantastic creatures of the night, holding their games in its sides and nooks. It was a tolerable representation of the mind of him who was looking at it. For images and thoughts were going through that without order, and of which he knew not whence they came nor whither they tended. His whole intellect and all his sensations were under the sway of some powers without him, which at one time expanded him with joyful hopes, and then again withered him with fearful and causeless despair. He lingered near the house a long time, till at length the sense of the endless duration and of the continued going on of life, with which nature impresses us, gradually gave a steadiness and cheerfulness to his thoughts ; and the fixed sky, and bright moon, and the image of Ma-

ry Aston, altogether wrought his soul to harmony, and he returned home tranquil and happy.

A real loyer is quite an unaccountable creature when awake; it would be altogether in vain to attempt describing his dreams. Edward did not wake, however, in that state of composed indifference in which we generally are when coming out of sleep. Before he was roused to a full possession of his faculties, there was a vague notion of something important to be done, or of some uncommon event in which he was concerned.

He did not find his sister at the breakfast table to tease him and divert him from his silent abstraction.—He grew more and more restless as the day advanced—his books seemed dull—he was wearied of sitting still, and as tired of walking. When we are in perplexity from having forgotten what we came after, we go back to the place we started from to set all right. Had he followed this method and gone to Mrs. Aston's, he would have rid himself at once of all his uneasiness. He was sensible enough of this.—“It is not within rule,” said he to himself. “What preposterous things these rules of society are—for all but blockheads and impertinents.” One in love

must be allowed to say so, yet he is wrong. We all stand in need of these rules more or less; and if they sometimes appear merely troublesome, a little trouble is well for the best of us. Facilities, for the most part, do more harm than good. Children of the next generation will find it so, and thank us little for what our half vanity and half affection are now so busy about for them.

Addison has written an essay showing why it is harder to conceive of eternity as never beginning than as never ending. Edward was as much puzzled to set bounds to his day, as we are to think of eternity without them. It closed upon him at last; and the next went on in the same way, till he found himself near the end of it, in a narrow lane back of Mrs. Aston's dwelling.

Though Mary Aston possessed much of that equability and patience of temper, for which women are so proverbial, it would look like a repetition of what has just been said to describe her feelings since she had parted from Edward. She had walked out towards night-fall, that the cool air might refresh her, and without knowing it, from a feeling, which goes for hope, but which perhaps has more of wishing than expectation

in it, that before she returned she might see Edward. Our wishes often give us expectations, but they as often direct our conduct where we have nothing to hope for. If they can do it in no other way, they will bring it about by putting us into a kind of fanciful state, and making the imaginary pass for the actual. It is not very wide of that condition which a child is in when he is mounted upon a walking-stick and plays it ~~in~~ this horse. It is a little ludicrous and mortifying, that wise and tall men should be caught in this way riding their own canes, so we will say nothing more about it.

The colour rose in the cheek of each, and their manner was slightly embarrassed, as they approached each other; but the sensitive tremulousness of the voice told more than these, what was at their hearts. Edward ~~of course~~ passed the evening with Mary and her mother. "You must pardon my staying to so late an hour. I am not a frequent visiter, but I never know when it is time to go." This he said as he rose and leaned over the back of his chair. It was some time before he quitted this, and there was longer lingering at the door-step; for Mary's voice made such soft and clear music in the still

night air, and her eyes, turned upward to the moon, were so like a kindred Heaven answering to that over their heads, how could he quit it all to be alone again!

*- Why do!  
Luce is  
generally  
made at  
full moon  
for then  
she is an  
Horn  
Stunck*

"Is it you, Mrs. Aston, or Mary," said Harriet one day, "who has wrought such a change in my once steady brother? Formerly he was never abroad, and now is never at home. I can answer the question myself. He comes to moralize upon the sin and vanity of the world, along with your mother, Mary. He rarely talks to girls like us; for he says he seldom meets with any who do not shew that they are all the time having an eye to themselves, let the subject they are conversing about be ever so serious or important. In his brotherly fondness, he would make me an exception, I dare say, did I ever talk seriously. The most I ever arrive at is to make him laugh, and be called a rattle head for my pains."

"His remark, I fear, is as true as any general one may be," answered Mary. "And he might have extended it to those of his own sex, though a good deal qualified, had he been as much inclined to observe them. The truth is, both girls and young men appear to more advantage

*not correct*

when conversing with those of an opposite sex older than themselves, than with those of about the same age. I always take most satisfaction in talking with men whose hair is turning grey."

"Should not Mary in all fairness except my grave brother, Mrs. Aston, who goes about looking as if he was always thinking upon something, as our old housekeeper says?"

"That were scarce necessary," said Mrs. Aston, not observing the flush which these few words threw over Mary's face. "I never met with a man who seemed more sincere and in earnest in what he was about. Besides, there is so much of the propriety of principle in his manner, which keeps off all encroachment without any appearance of his being on his guard, and such a simple and unostentatious delicacy, altogether unlike that showy complaisance which passes for good breeding, but is exceeding vulgar, because it supposes an inferiority in him towards whom it is displayed,—that I should argue ill of the character or discernment of one who did not feel the beauty of his conduct upon a first acquaintance."

"What a tell I have got to carry home to my brother," said Harriet, going.

"You must not carry any ~~tells~~ <sup>tells</sup> from me, Harriet."

"~~Why~~, why not, Madam? They are the best things in the world to put folks in good humour. I always manufacture one for my prim aunt, when I go to pass the day with her, as I sometimes have to do, because mother says it is proper to visit our relations."

"Perhaps your aunt is too old to be injured by them," said Mary, smiling; yet there is nothing in the world which has turned so many wise men into fools."

"I will be even with you for your hit at my aunt's vanity, Miss Mary. And to pay you for your philosophy, which ill becomes a Miss in her teens, I shall dress up the compliment as well as I know how, and when ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> is urged to a disclosure, confess that I had it from Miss Mary Aston."

"Don't turn your brother's brain with a ~~tell~~ <sup>tell</sup> from a young lady. If you must reveal it, let him know that it came from an old one," said Mrs. Aston.

"Now I did not expect that from you, Ma'am, who had just said so much about his wisdom, and when it was but the other night that he

talked so gravely about virtue's only being sure when resting wholly on itself, and finding its satisfactions within, and not in distinctions that attend it abroad. Come, Mary, you sha'n't look so gravely and anxiously at me," said Harriet, taking her hand, as Mary followed her to the door. "You need not fear me. And even if I should divert myself with some idle story, I trust," she added a little embarrassed, "he would not take it as any thing more than my foolery." Mary returned the pressure of her hand, and wished her cheerfully a pleasant walk home, as she sprang lightly from the step.

Mary went happy to her chamber, reflecting upon the warm manner in which her mother had spoken in praise of Edward, and thinking her the best mother that ever lived.

Though Harriet was no go-between, and despised matchmaking as heartily as it deserves to be ; yet she had such a love for her brother, and took so deep an interest in all that concerned him, and was so desirous that he might shake off that melancholy which too often preyed upon him, by finding an object for his affections to fasten on, that she could not avoid showing how happy it made her to find that Mary and her



brother were so strongly attached to each other. Upon her return home, she could not help letting fall certain expressions and remarks which referred to Mrs. Aston's opinion of him, and showing what she surmised were Mary's feelings. This she did cautiously and in a playful way, for she well knew that Edward was not a man to be talked to, or to talk of his affections, and she knew how to respect him for it.

"Am I not sure that she loves me?" said he, as he shut his study door. "And why should I delay? Is it not trifling with myself, and, what is more, with a woman of delicate and ardent feelings?"—He had asked himself these very questions before. And those who go to proffer terms of marriage with certificates of property and letters of recommendation in their pockets, must think him a very odd sort of fellow to make such a pother about what they had done before him off hand. Some are blessed with an undisturbed worldly wisdom, while others are carried to and fro, or hurried or delayed by impulses and sensations made up of exquisite pleasures and acute pains over which they have little control. Heaven help these last. The first can take care of themselves, at least for this world.

There are men of a certain refined sense, brave men too, and with not a whit of awkward bashfulness in them neither, who could no more tell a woman that they loved her, just when they chose to fix the time—even when they knew the affection mutual—than Cowper could have spoken in the House of Commons.

Urgent business of his father's prevented Edward's seeing Mary till the next evening. The parlour door was open. He entered the room, and drew near the window where she was sitting, without being observed by her, for she was lost in melancholy to all about her. To feel neglected by him would have been hard enough to bear; but the fear that Harriet, in her thoughtless chat, had said something which had lowered her in the opinion of Edward, was intolerable. The ill opinion of such a man was almost enough to make even the innocent feel the shame of guilt.

The melancholy of those we love, when a token of their interest in us, gives us almost as deep a delight for a time, as when we think we make them happy—perhaps a deeper. For almost any one may move another to pleasure, and the degrees of pleasure cannot always be distinguished. But when one is in grief from some small

circumstance in love, we have an assurance that there can be no mistake. When Edward looked upon Mary's fine face, and saw it overcast, and said to himself, "this is because of me," an exquisite joy thrilled through his heart, at the same time that she was dearer to him than ever. His voice betrayed his emotion as he spoke, and suddenly raising her eyes, she saw his grand, serious countenance lighted up with a smile full of love. There was an answering one in Mary's face, mingled with an expression of confusion, and something like pain from the surprise and the suddenness of the change in her feelings. This was a fine moment for a lover. Not so for Edward,—he was too full of delightful sensations, and could only look on in still rapture. When he at last spoke, his words had little to do with his immediate thoughts, and he was as far from his purpose as ever. She moved a little, and Edward sat down by her in the old window-seat. Her beautifully turned arm and tapering, ~~f~~impled fingers were resting on the window-ledge.—"Did I ever see that ring before?" said he.

"No, for I have just received it. 'It was a seal-ring of my grandfather's,'" she added, half laughing.

"Whether your grandfather's or a younger man's," he replied, looking somewhat anxiously in her face, "it is a very curious one." She was half offended and half pleased at this show of jealous regard.—"Upon my word, Mr. Shirley, do you think that it is in my way to wear young men's rings?"—Then changing her voice to her usual tone;—"It is rather a singular one. Will you look at it?" she said frankly, at the same time drawing it from her finger.

If we are not very careful, we cannot take so little a thing as a ring from another without the hands touching slightly; nor is it very easy for two persons to examine curiously so small a matter without their heads coming nigh to each other. It is ten to one that, at any rate, you will feel some stray, curling lock touching every now and then against your forehead. You may know that it is not your own, without looking at it, by the thrill it sends through the brain and bosom. There is a breath too, pure as air, which reaches you,—there is no such atmosphere in the whole world for sensations. There needs no talking at such a moment; there is a close and silent communion of the thoughts and awakened senses, by which we understand each other

better than we could by words, though we culled the choicest from the language of every nation on the globe. Even the tones of love in all their softness, at such a time, would break up the beautiful working of the charm, and turn all to common life again.

Mary took the ring off, but it was Edward who put it on again. It was done with so much respectful delicacy, and with such a gentle touch of the hand, that a dedicated nun could not have been offended at it. Mary's heart beat quick, and as her eyes fell on the ring, she took it as a pledge of love. What need was there of a declaration after this? There was none made that night.

The conversation took a moralizing turn, and a good deal was said about the feelings—not in a prosing way. There was a closer intimacy in the cast of it, than there had been before. They knew the character of each others minds and dispositions as well as if they had lived together for years. Some will say this is impossible. Their opinion may be true enough so far as concerns themselves and half the world beside. Most people might well be married by proxy, like princes, as to any knowledge they have of

one another's character at the time. And it is a pity that many of them could not remain in their ignorance, so badly are they sorted. The most they ever arrive at is a sort of unwillingness to be long apart, from a habit of having been much together. There are peculiar people, however, who get as much into what is essential in each others character in half an hour's acquaintance, by what is said, and the manner in which things are said or done, as others would, should they pass together the lives of a patriarch and his spouse.—Then you are a believer in love at first sight?—I believe that such a thing may be, or something very like it.

They were walking in front of the house, when the time came for Edward to return home. "Stay a moment, Mr. Shirley; late as it is, you must help me about my woodbine once more, before you go."—As they were training it up, their eyes met, and their looks showed to each other that the time when they first saw one another, and all which had passed since, were in their thoughts.

"What did you think of me ~~then~~?" said he. "When?" she asked. ~~And~~ half ashamed of feigning ignorance of what she perfectly under-

stood—"think of you? Why, much as I do now, and as I trust I always shall."

"If I interpret this according to my wishes, shall I be right?"

"I hope so," she said colouring, "or what could your opinion be of me else?"

"The same as it always has been and must be. For much as I should suffer to be without your esteem and kind regard, Mary," he said, taking her hand, "you will always have mine. I would say more, but, I know not why, I cannot now. Need I say it? You know what I feel, for I have ever shown myself to you what I am, though I cannot to all the world—All is not well at my heart now. 'Tis strange. I was the happiest man alive a moment ago. No matter,—we shall meet again to-morrow. Whether we meet or not, whether good or ill comes to me," he said, taking her hand within both of his and pressing it earnestly, "may God's best blessing rest upon you forever, Mary."—His voice faltered.—Mary tried to speak. It was in vain. Her lips moved, but there was no sound. She raised her eyes to his with a piteous and imploring look. She was not given to tears, like the rest of her sex, yet they filled her eyes

now. Edward kissed away one that stood on her cheek, and hurried from her with a bewildered mind.

Are not our feelings sometimes like holy prophets, sent to make us ready against evils which we see not, but which are nigh at hand? Edward continued his walk till a late hour, that he might rid himself of the feverish restlessness which tormented his body and mind.

Mr. Shirley had been from home for a couple of days, and had returned during Edward's absence. As Edward drew near the house, he saw a light in his father's study. He perceived by the frequent darkening of the candle that some one was walking the room with a rapid pace. His feelings were in a state to bode ill. It was unusual for his father to be up at so late an hour, and Edward remembered that for several days before his leaving home he had appeared anxious and abstracted. Edward's character was so matured and of so serious a cast, that his father treated him rather as a companion than a son. He entered the house, and went immediately to the study-door and knocked.—“Who's there?” called out his father in a startled voice.—“It is I, sir.”—“O, Edward! Come in!”—In-



stead of turning and giving Edward his hand as usual, Mr. Shirley continued walking the room without noticing him. Edward looked at his father. The room shook as he walked it to and fro, and the foot seemed to grasp the floor at every step. His arms were folded with a convulsive closeness over his breast. The muscles of his face worked violently, and the blood beat like a sea through the clear, high veins of his temples.—“I have been waiting for you this hour,” said he at last in a low choked voice, and without turning his head. His pace grew quicker and quicker—every tightened fibre of his body vibrated with agony, and seemed stretched till ready to snap asunder.—“You are all beggars,” he cried out at last, throwing himself into his chair and gasping for breath. Edward’s alarm for his father scarcely left him conscious of what he had said. He went to him, and taking his hand, spoke in so affectionate a voice that it touched him to the quick. The tears started to his father’s eyes;—it was the first time he had ever suffered man to see one there. He grew composed at last, and bracing himself to the act, told his son all that had happened.

It appears that Mr. Shirley's fortune had been an ample one ; but having attached certain notions of princely grandeur to wealth, he had in a moment of ambition put the whole at stake in expectation of doubling it ; the speculation failed and he lost nearly all.

"You are much exhausted, sir," said Edward, after talking with his father a long time ; "you must go to bed and endeavour to sleep. In the morning we will see what can be done. I hope all is not as bad as you think." "Good night to you, Edward," said he, much moved, and taking his son's hand. "I hope this news has not come too late to prevent your involving another in our calamity. If not, I know you have too much principle in you to bind such a woman to your hard fortune, let the effort to stop short now cost you what it may." "I know not—I hope—," said Edward, with a struggle. His father pressed his hand and left the room.

For a man of a shy disposition and retired habits, who has nurtured all his romantic thoughts in solitary musing—whose whole intellectual being is made up of sentiment and imagination—who has never thought nor cared for business nor gain—to attempt of a sudden to

change his very nature, and ignorant as an infant, to find out for himself through the intricacies of trades or professions a way amidst shrewd, and calculating, and knowing men, is almost a hopeless undertaking. Though Edward did not want energy or perseverance, he was not presumptuous ; and understanding his own character thoroughly, and how far nature and education had unfitted him for a man of business, he was too well principled and generous to endure the thought of connecting another with his desperate fortune, and of knowing that while he was vainly struggling on, her life was wearing away in faint and delayed hopes.

As the door shut upon him, it seemed as if every living thing had quitted him, and he was left alone upon the bare earth. Though his passions were deep rooted, and the smallest fibres of them were alive with the love of Mary, his father's sufferings had made him for the moment forgetful of his own. And now that he was left to himself, and saw that he was shorn of all hope, it was the thought of Mary that wrung him so.—“A few hours ago, Mary, and you came to me with the elastic spring of a glad and fond spirit, and your countenance opened and

brightened like the morning upon me. It is all over now—the light is shut out, and you must wither in the cold and damp which is ready to fall on you. I could bear my own sufferings, and go to my grave alone, sooner or later, as God might will for me; but I cannot, I cannot bear the thought of what you will suffer—you whom I have taught to love me so.”—He continued walking the room till the birds began sending out short, broken notes, and stirring themselves in the trees. He went to his chamber and fell into a short, uneasy slumber from over weariness.

Though Edward’s feelings were stronger than fall to the lot of many, they were of that deep kind, and with such a mixture of the intellectual, as left to his firm mind a grand self-control. He met the family at breakfast with a composed though melancholy countenance. Immediately after, he went with his father to the study, and assisted him, as far as he was able, in adjusting his papers. All was in order in a few days to deliver up to the creditors. As they were few, and gentlemen who had a full reliance upon Mr. Shirley, every thing was done so as to spare his feelings. He was sensible of

it, with mixt pride and gratitude. The family were to leave the mansion and retire to a small house, which, with a trifling income, was all that was left of the estate.

“Harriet,” said Edward, the morning after he was made acquainted with his father’s loss, “will you write to Mary and tell her what has happened. I cannot see her till every thing is adjusted. It would unman me, and there is much to be done, and my poor father must have all my assistance.—You must command yourself better,” said he in a low melancholy tone.—“I will, I will, Edward; but I could not have loved a sister better; and I have almost lived upon the thought of late, that I was to see you both so happy soon! It is all over now.”—Edward hurried out of the room.

In a few days the family were ready to depart. They entered an old family coach, and drove off as silent as if following a friend to the grave. Edward was to remain behind till every thing was delivered up. The furniture was sent away to the city to be sold, and he was now ready to follow his parents and sister.

So long as there remained any duties for Edward to fulfil, he bore up firmly against this

sudden destruction of his hopes. The unrelaxed and intense effort had nearly exhausted both mind and body, and yet the hardest trial of all was to come. He was to meet Mary and to part with her, perhaps, forever. "Only a few days ago, thought he, while I was absent from her, I was impatient of every thing till the hour came that I was to meet her. I scarcely dare think of it now."

The solitude of the house oppressed him, and seemed to forebode some deadly evil. "I can bear it no longer; something terrible haunts me; I shall go wild."—As he was hurrying out of the house, old Jacob, the only domestic left behind, met him at the door. "Where are you going this sad night, Mr. Edward? The mist drops from the leaves like rain, and a heavy storm is setting in. It has been brewing all day long, and begins to stir hard in the trees."

"So much the better, so much the better," muttered Edward, pressing forward; then stopping a moment,—“have every thing ready to start by sunrise, Jacob."

"It will be hard to tell that time to-morrow, Sir," answered Jacob, as Edward was shutting

the door, "if I know what the weather will be from one hour to another."

The night had nearly shut in, and the rocks and trunks of trees, which were almost black from the dampness which had been upon them the day through, seemed to Edward's disturbed mind like gloomy monsters watching his steps, as he half caught their forms through the thick twilight as he hastened by them. "Is this the place where I first walked by the side of Mary and heard her voice!" thought he, as he passed along the avenue. "It is all changed, and I am left alone."

He drew near the house. It was lost in the darkness, except where the heavy mist reflected back the light of a candle in the parlour window, giving through the dimness to the peaks and juts the appearance of pale, uncertain flames shooting up into sharp points. No other light could be seen.—"How quietly it shines! And is all within as tranquil as that flame? No, Mary, I will not wrong you; you could not so forget me."

As he came nearer to the house, his blood throbbed quick; he started at the sound of the beating of his heart. He waited a moment to gain a little self-command. The door was open-

ed to him, and he entered the parlour. Mrs. Aston was in the room alone. As she turned and saw the pale and worn countenance of Edward, she started ; but suddenly recovering herself, she went up to him and took him kindly by the hand. " Why have you kept away from us so long ?" inquired she in a gentle but agitated voice. " You do not take us for summer flies, I know, Mr. Shirley."

" O, if I did, madam, I should not come now to trouble you this last time."

" Do you go so soon ? Are we not to see you again ?" " I must go to-morrow," he answered vehemently. " Whether I shall see you again, I know not, I cannot tell." ●

" Better days will come to you ; you are a very young man yet, Mr. Shirley."

Edward shook his head mournfully, but made no reply. They both continued a long time silent. Edward at last approached Mrs. Aston, and said, " can I not see Mary for a few minutes before I go ?"—A slight colour rose in his cheek, but the sad expression of his face was unchanged when he said, " it would be childish in me, dear Mrs. Aston, to suppose that you are ignorant of my feelings. But," he added, the flush of pride



heightening his colour as he spoke, "I believe you know me too well to fear that, unskilled in affairs as I am, and with little reason from my cast of character for hope of success, I can be so weak or selfish as to bind another to me in my evil fortunes."

"I need not answer that, Mr. Shirley." The tears filled her eyes as she put out her hand once more and gave him her blessing. She left the room, and meeting Mary, told her that Edward was below.

He was walking the room with a hurried step as Mary entered. She attempted to go towards him, but her whole frame shook, and she tottered towards a chair. He sprung forward and caught her before she sunk to the floor. Her face was deadly pale, and her eye for a moment glazed. The sound of his voice recalled her senses, but as she raised her head, there was a wild and haggard look of misery in his countenance that made her shudder, and she covered her eyes with her hand.—"Do you shrink from me, Mary?" said he, in a mournful tone. "O! no, no, Edward. But do not, do not look so strangely at me, as if you were mad. Look as calm and kind as you spoke then, and I will

never turn from you.”—Her head fell upon his shoulder, and she sobbed audibly.—Edward’s face was turned upward—his mouth moved convulsively—he would have prayed aloud for blessing and comfort on her. An inarticulate, throttled sound was all that reached Mary’s ear. She raised her head suddenly and gazed upon his face. How was it changed! Affliction had not left it, but there was a brightness, a rapture in it, which she could almost have worshipped. It was one of those passing exaltations of the spirit which sometimes in our misery lift us for a moment above the earth. It left him and his countenance fell. “Is it gone, is it gone?” cried Mary, “and is there no comfort left us?”

“None;” he answered in a low voice, “~~none~~, at least for me, in this world.”

“O, do not add to my misery, Edward, by being ungenerous to me. Do not say that I can change and find comfort when you cannot.”

“Forgive me, Mary, I did not mean to be unkind. I scarce know what I say—my brain has been sadly bewildered with what I have gone through in a few short days. But this parting would not, you know it would not be so hard to me, could I believe you a creature made to

change. Sit down by me and hear me a moment, and then I must leave you.”—He spoke so low and with so much effort that his voice was scarcely audible; yet there was something fearfully determined in it.—“I cannot blame myself for having given way so far to my feelings to-night. After what passed between us when we last met, Mary, it would have been unmanly, it would have been a base insult to the delicacy of your character, for me to have treated you otherwise now than if you acknowledged a return of my love for you. Yet I have told my father that I hoped it was not too late to keep you from my evil fortune, and I have said to your mother to-night that I would never bind you to my poverty. My father may have misunderstood me,—I hardly knew what I said. Your mother must have seen too much to have mistaken me. Both must be remembered. All must end here—here, where we are to part.”

“All? Then all is to be as though it had never been. Say you so, Edward?”

“Do not mistake me, Mary;—we must not part in unkindness. There is enough of woe without that. Though I will not give over without a hard and long struggle, yet I am poor now,

and something tells me, that with all my efforts, I shall die so. The seal of misery is on me, and I shall carry it to my grave. I hope, I hope it is not far off. Could I but see you happy, it would be some consolation to me. No, no, it would not. I could not bear to have all that I have dwelt upon as so peculiar and lovely in your character change, even to relieve you from all you suffer. But you must not be bound to me by any understanding between us. I know there is that in you which will always make me dear to you. Surely I need not speak of myself," said he, with a struggle of agony, "but you never will be mine."

"Are we to see each other no more then? Are we to live only in the memory of each other, and without hope? I will be sincere with you, Edward, and will not add to what you suffer, by saying that you could not make this sacrifice, did it cost you what you tell me it does. I know," said she, raising her eyes to his with a look all of confidence, "the struggle will be as hard to you, and endure as long, as with me. I could not say more. Miserable as it will make us, I know that your feeling is grounded in honour. And though it may seem to have connected with it a doubt

whether time and absence may not change my love for you, I could not wrong you so, as to think you could be so suspicious of me. I know you better, Edward, indeed I do."

"This is noble and generous in you, Mary," said he, pressing her to his heart. "I did not look for all this even from you. Good God! how can I part from you!—It must be done now," he cried, starting suddenly from her. In an instant he was ready. As he turned, she came to him. There was a hopeless misery in her face. She flung her arms about his neck, and hung powerless upon him as he held her to his bosom.

"Mary, Mary," he repeated, alarmed. She made no answer. The wind drove violently against the window, and the rain dashed against it like a flood. She shivered as if the cold blast struck her. "Must he go, and in the storm and rain too," murmured she to herself.—At length she raised herself a little.—"Do not fear for me, Edward,—it is past,—I am better now. Go, go," she said quickly. He stood for a moment—he would have said something—it was all in vain. He caught her madly to him, and then darting from her, left the house.

Mrs. Aston heard the door shut after him. She went down to her daughter, and found her sitting, leaning a little forward with her eyes fixed on the door. She did not move them as her mother entered, and there was a stupor over her countenance. Mrs. Aston took her by the hand, but she did not appear to heed it.—“You must go to bed, Mary,” said her mother, putting her arm round her and gently raising her from the chair. She made no answer, but suffered herself to be partly carried to her chamber. When she was in bed, her mother sat down by her; but she seemed not to notice it; and presently fell asleep, as if unconscious of what had happened.

The night was so dark that the atmosphere was like some deep black body directly before the eye. Edward hurried forward down the avenue. The trees, which raved and roared in the wind like fiends of the storm, served to guide him by their sound. As he quitted them, and their noise died gradually away, he groped his way homeward. He reached the house with a mind as bewildered as in a fearful dream. The instant change from the tumult and uproar of the storm to the perfect stillness and calm within doors, brought back all that had past, with ter-

rible suddenness. He went into the room where Jacob was sitting, waiting for him, and taking up his candle, passed by without looking at him. —“Poor Mr. Edward,” said Jacob to himself, as he took the remaining light to go to bed, “it is hard that you who are so good should suffer so much.”

Edward could not go to rest. He went into his father’s study, and then from one room to another, traversing the whole house. He was for a while in that vague and idle state which the mind is thrown into at intervals, in extreme suffering, taking notice of trifles, and remembering a multitude of unmeaning things, while it is unconscious of the affliction which is ready to press again upon it. His eyes wandered vacantly over the naked walls, till they at last rested on the discoloured places where the pictures had hung. He was not sensible at first at what he was looking ; but his mind was by degrees moved, and he was presently brought again to the recollection of his condition. If the earth had been swept of every living thing but himself, the sense of desertion could not have weighed heavier upon him. He passed on to his chamber —the wind moaned in the chimneys ; and as he

trod over the bare floors, the empty house was filled with the sharp echoes of his steps, which seemed to chatter and mock at him.

The next morning he began his journey. The violence of the storm was over, but it was a dull, drizzly day. He passed it in silence, busy with his melancholy thoughts. He took little notice of what was about him. The home of Mary Aston, as he had seen it in storm and sunshine, was in his mind. He thought of her deep love for him, her serious and unchanging mind, her frank and confiding looks and manner towards him. He would have laid down his life to have given her the peace of mind which was hers before she knew him,—he would have done more—he would have dragged on a life of misery.

● Jacob spoke the first word that was uttered.—“We are half through our journey, Sir. I know it by the wood just ahead of us.”—Edward looked out upon the wood by way of answer to Jacob. It was autumn, and the leaves in all their gaudy and varied colours, hung dripping and flagging in the damp air. It seemed a cruel taunt upon the gay hopes and forced mirth of the world. Edward shut his eyes upon the sight, heart-sick. There was none of the spirit



of scorn in him; he felt it rather as an emblem of his own withered joys. The day dragged on heavily, and Edward reached his new home about dark, tired in body and mind.

One who had seen him when he met the family, would have known little of what his inward sufferings were. Besides his aversion from discovering his deeper feelings, even to his own family, he was conscious of the duty upon him, to strengthen the fortitude of his parents. His endeavours were of little benefit to his father. Mr. Shirley was of a high, restless spirit; and his sudden fall from wealth and distinction and the stir of society, heated his warm temperament, and he died of a violent fever after a few months' illness. Edward was as a nurse to his father through his sickness; and after Mr. Shirley's death, was as kind and attentive to his mother, and as anxious about every little thing which he thought would turn away her mind from her afflictions, as if his spirit was free of all trouble, except as it concerned her. Harriet spoke of it in a letter, in answer to one she had received from Mary, not long after Mr. Shirley's death. —“ My mother feels his kindness sensibly. She cannot speak of it to me, without shedding tears.

He is soon to leave us. I do not know how my mother will bear his departure. Something, all the while, is making him secretly miserable. I can only conjecture what has taken place, for your letter reveals nothing, and his is so sacred a melancholy, that I dare not break in upon it."

These exertions were for Edward's good. For sensitive minds are prone to a melancholy, which may in the end weaken the intellect, unless they have some object to engage them, and give action to the affections.

The winter was gloomy and cold, the spring opened late, and the weather continued raw and uncomfortable, and there appeared to be a sympathising dejection throughout every thing in nature. The time came for Edward's departure, and he prepared to leave home. Though he had sustained so hard a struggle in parting with Mary, it was not because he thought, for a moment, of sitting down in hopeless inaction. His father's sickness and death had prevented his putting his plans in immediate execution.

In the midst of this dreariness and dejection, a relation of Mrs. Shirley's returned from abroad, after an absence of several years. This gentle-

man's name was Pennington. Though much older than Edward's father, they were many years fast friends. Unfortunately, some trifling controversy took place between them; and both having a little too much pride, and enough of the punctilious character which was so marked in the old fashioned gentry, a hasty altercation ended in a lasting separation; for neither of them could think of making advances. Though this was a cause of mutual uneasiness, and each in a short time felt as strong a regard and attachment to the other as they had ever done, Mr. Pennington went abroad on some commercial speculations, without their bidding each other farewell. Edward's father was too proud to suffer his old friend to be made acquainted with his difficulties. He could not bear to think of the obligation which he knew he should be laid under, were his circumstances made known to the kind-hearted Mr. Pennington.—“It was my hasty temper,” said Mr. Shirley to Edward, a little before his death, “which made the breach between us. I have stood out foolishly against a reconciliation, and repentance comes too late.”

Mr. Pennington was much affected on his arrival in the country, at hearing of Mr. Shirley's

loss of property, and death. He wrote immediately to Mrs. Shirley, and spoke in the most feeling manner of the regret and self-reproach he felt in having suffered any criminal pride on his part, to separate him from a man for whom he had always had so great esteem and friendship. He expressed the earnest wish that he might be allowed to visit the family and atone for the past, so far as was now left to him, by every mark of kindness and regard which he could pay.

He arrived in a few days, and was received as one of his character deserved to be. Edward and Harriet were delighted with him. Though a man of deep feelings, he had an energetic and clear mind; and at the same time that he was not forgetful or careless of the loss of friends, or the sufferings of others, he had that practical philosophy, which by a constant aim at improvement and the happiness of those about us, begets healthful activity of mind, and an habitual cheerfulness of the spirits. Although he had been so long abroad, he had lost nothing of his former character, and his snuff-coloured, broad-skirted coat, waistcoat-flaps, and ample silver shoe-buckles, and long, golden-headed cane, showed him as little changed in dress. His address had

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the courtly formality of the old school,—not a mere cumbersome ceremony, because made up of such delicate and respectful regards to others' feelings, that with all its manner, it seemed a simple effluence of the heart. He was altogether an excellent sample of an old-fashioned, thorough-bred gentleman.

As far advanced in life as he was, he had not lost his interest and sympathy in the feelings of the young ; and the uncommon cast of Edward's character, the beautiful propriety of his manner, and the deference which he showed to age, won so immediately upon the old man's heart, that upon hearing from Mrs. Shirley that her son was about leaving home to try his fortune, he cried out,—“What ! my friend's son turn adventurer, and I sitting at home at my ease, with nothing but my wealth to plague me ! No ! that must never be. If he loves the girl, he shall have her, and that without ever setting foot a ship-board ; for they tell me she is worthy of him ; and that is saying enough for any girl, God bless her.”—Having made up his mind, and with his heart full of the matter, with that alacrity which belongs to a vigorous old man, he left the room in-

stantly for the purpose of falling in with Edward.

They met at the outer door.

"You are going to walk," said Mr. Pennington. "You are rather a grave and silent companion, but as I am a talkative old gentleman, and like to be listened to, it is so much the better. Will you allow me to join you?"

"If you think me worthy being a listener, sir, it will give me great pleasure."

After walking a little way into a wood back of the house, Mr. Pennington began speaking of his large fortune, and his great success in the management of it abroad. "I have done with business, Mr. Shirley, and am growing so old and lazy, that half my fortune, I am afraid, will only be a trouble to me. I have been impertinent enough to seek out from your mother and sister the cause of your melancholy. I depend upon your forgiveness, by telling you I have that will cure it."—Edward coloured, and was about speaking.—"Stop," said Mr. Pennington, "you forget your part,—you are the listener. It is I must do all the talking. I have taken it into my head to do the very thing your father would have done for a child of mine, had our situations been

reversed. I'm going to make you my principal heir. But as I am growing old, and might in some fond moment fall in love with my cook or house-keeper, to make you sure, I've determined to settle an annuity upon you this very day.—Hold your peace, sir,—I've not done yet.—The principal creditor took the mansion-house and furniture; he has been bought out at a good bargain, and quitted yesterday. So every thing is standing, as when your mother left the place. I intended that she should have gone back to the mansion; but as she has determined to occupy the small house near it, you have nothing to do but start off in the morning, and take possession of the homestead. And I give you joy of such a fine girl as they say Miss Aston is. There's my hand, Mr. Shirley."—Edward pressed it, and his eyes filled with tears.—"Come, come," said the old gentleman, forcing a laugh, "'tis altogether a melancholy affair, I know; but then we will try to drown it in a glass of wine after dinner. The deuce is in it, if I don't make you drink with me for once."

He turned off suddenly down a straggling foot-path, and left Edward so surprised, that he scarce knew whether it was joy or sorrow that so confounded his senses.

"Your brother is certainly dumbfounded," said Mr. Pennington, after dinner. "You and I, Harriet, have had all the talking thrown upon us, as usual."

"Harriet is always a good girl," said Edward, smiling, "and has done her duty, as she always does, in like cases."

"You must excuse my brother, Mr. Pennington. He is melancholy at the thought of leaving us. Cheer up, Edward; you sha'n't be left all alone long. We shall be after you in a few days, to take possession of our new habitation. Pray tell me, are you and Jacob to occupy the big house all your days, with Peggy for house-keeper, like the Master of Ravenswood and old Caleb?—By the by, Edward, and before you swallow that wine, glass and all, if you happen to see Miss Aston, give my love to her, and tell her we are coming, and hope to make good neighbours," she added, tapping Edward upon the shoulder, as she ran by him out of the room.

"A madcap, that girl," said Mr. Pennington. "Come, Mr. Shirley, one glass to your to-morrow's journey, and I've done."

Edward bade his mother good by, and prepared for his journey with feelings so tumultuous



that they were almost painful to him. He was stirring with the birds in the morning, and meant to have been off without seeing any of the family but his fellow-traveller, Jacob. But Harriet was too restless with joy to sleep, for she loved and idolized her brother. If she had not, she never would have teased him so. She met him as he was quitting the house. "A pleasant drive to you, Ned!" Then putting on a demure look—"Don't forget to remember me to sister Mary." "You are inveterate, Harriet. What, joking before breakfast! Go your ways," said he, springing into the carriage.

It was a fine bright morning after a shower, the sky of a clear, deep blue, and the piled clouds tinged in the sun. The rain-drops were falling from the trees like pearl, and the blossoms sailing gently down, and scattering themselves over the grass like snow-flakes. The air was breezy and fresh, filling the whole frame with sensations of delight; and the brooks ran shining on, prattling like young living things noisy with joy. But an image more beautiful, and fairer than all these, was before Edward's eyes. He saw it between the green trees, and resting upon the white clouds; its voice was in the clouds,

and by the sides of the rocks. There are chosen hours when some men have more of life than falls to others in a multitude of years. Edward's fine steeds swept quickly round the turnings of the road—there was a swift and constant changing of objects going on—every thing on the earth seemed in action, and he felt as if there was a spirit of motion within him, bearing him onward.

Long before sunset, they began to enter upon the scenery familiar to them. They soon came in sight of the house. It was no longer gloomy and deserted, the doors locked, and shutters barred; but the windows were thrown up, and doors all wide open, as if it were holy-day. The domestics who had remained in the neighbourhood, and the tenants, could be seen pointing out to each other the carriage, as it wound up the road to the house. In a few minutes Edward sprang out into the midst of them; and there were more glad faces about him, than, a week before, he could have dreamed were contained in the whole world. So do our notions of things change with our state.

When wishing joy, and how do ye do, were over, old Jacob was in full tide of narrative,

to her cheeks at the sound ; she started forward, and threw herself into his arms. There was a perfect stillness. He felt her heart beat violently as he held her to him. Nature at last gave way—she sobbed out aloud, and in a voice broken with a wild laugh, and scarcely articulate, she cried—“Is it Edward, and is it true I am his, and are we no more to part?”—“You are, indeed, mine now, Mary,—look at me, and make it real to me.”—She raised her head, her hands resting on his shoulders ; her eyes swam with tears, but a bright joy broke through them which came from the very soul, and her face was all tremulous with the intenseness of love. Edward kissed away the tear on her lid ; and as he gazed upon her face, and fondly parted back the hair from her fine forehead, tears started in his eyes, answering to hers. It was a moment too full of feeling, for words.

When they grew more calm, and Mary sat by him with her hand in his, Edward told her hastily what his good old relation had done for them. Mary breathed out a blessing upon him. Then turning and looking up in Edward’s face—“to remember,” said she, “how haggard and strange you seemed when we parted, and now to see you

gaze upon me so fond and happy—O, it makes me forget myself in my joy for what you feel.”

In talking of the past, and giving utterance to the present fulness of feeling, they forgot that the night was wearing away.—“It is time for you to go,” said Mary, at last.—“I know it,” he said. “The thought that we are to meet to-morrow makes me, I could almost say, more than willing to part now.”

As they separated half way down the walk, it was the happiest good night they had ever bid each other.

Life now was one deep and wide joy to them ; all things that grew looked like sharers in one common delight, and a cheerful and sympathizing benevolence made the world appear as if there was nothing but gladness and good will amongst men. Their souls seemed from day to day to become closer united, and to be fast making as it were but one being.—It was not long before Mary became the wife of Edward. ' / ' /

## POETRY.

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WHEN insect wings are glistening in the beam

Of the low sun, and mountain tops are bright,

Oh let me, by the valley's lovely stream,

Wander amid the mild and mellow light ;

And while the red-breast pipes his evening lay,

Give me one lonely hour to hymn the setting day.

Oh sun ! that o'er the western mountains now

Go'st down in glory ! ever beautiful

And blessed is thy radiance, whether th

Colourest the eastern heaven and night mists cool,

Till the bright day-star vanish, or on high

Climbest, and streamest thy white splendours from mid-  
sky.

Yet loveliest are thy setting smiles, and fair—

Fairest of all that earth has seen—the hues

That live among the clouds and flush the air,

Lingering and deepening at the hour of dews ;

Then softest gales are breathed, and softest heard

The plaining voice of streams, and pensive note of bird.

They who here roamed, of yore, the forest wide,  
 Felt by such charm their simple bosoms won,  
 They deemed their quivered warrior, when he died,  
 Went to bright isles beneath the setting sun,  
 Where winds are aye at peace, and skies are fair,  
 And crimson-skirted clouds curtain the rosy air.

So, with the glories of the dying day,  
 Its thousand trembling lights and changing hues,  
 The memory of the brave that passed away  
 Tenderly mingled ; fitting hour to muse  
 On such grave theme, and sweet the dream that shed  
 Brightness and beauty round the destiny of the dead !

For ages, on the silent forest here,  
 Thy beams did fall, before the red man came  
 To dwell beneath them ; in their shade the deer  
 Fed, and feared not the arrow's deadly aim ;  
 Nor tree was felled in all that world of woods,  
 Save by the beaver's tooth, or winds, or rush of floods.

Then came the hunter tribes, and thou didst look  
 For ages, on their deeds in the hard chase  
 And well-fought wars ; green sod and silver brook  
 Took the first stain of blood ; before thy face  
 The warrior generations came and past,  
 And glory was laid up for many an age to last.

Now they are gone—gone, as thy setting blaze  
 Goes down the west, while night is pressing on ;  
 And with them, the old tale of better days  
 And trophies of remembered power are gone.  
 Yon field, that gives the harvest, where the plough  
 Strikes the white bone, is all that tells their story now.

I stand upon their ashes in thy beam,  
 The offspring of another race, I stand  
 Beside a stream they loved—this valley stream ;  
 And where the night-fire of the quivered band  
 Showed the grey oak by fits, and war-song rung,  
 I teach the quiet shades the strains of this new tongue.

Farewell ! but thou shalt come again—thy light  
 Must shine on other changes, and behold  
 The place of the thronged city still as night—  
 States fallen—new empires built upon the old—  
 But never shalt thou see these realms again  
 Darkened with boundless groves and roamed by savage  
 men.

THE  
  
IDLE MAN.

VOL. I.

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How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle. *Cowper.*

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NEW-YORK:  
WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.

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1821-2.



*Southern District of New-York, ss.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of May, in the forty-fifth year of the independence of the United States of America, WILEY & HALSTED, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, *to wit* :

The Idle Man.

How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle. *Cowper.*

In conformity to the act of the congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned ;" and also to an act, entitled, "An act, supplementary to an act, entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

G. L. THOMPSON,  
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

## TO THE PUBLIC.

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As this is a much larger number than any of the foregoing, it is put at a higher price, that I may receive something like a compensation for the labour. For the future, the cost of the several numbers will vary with their size. It is my wish and intention, however, to keep as much as possible within my old limits.

A story will sometimes run out to a greater length than was intended. This is the case with one begun for the Idle Man. I am desirous of making it a part of this work, but am in doubt, on account of its size, whether to publish it separately, or in connexion with the Idle Man. In whatever form it may be put out, its publication will be delayed for a short time.

The present number closes the first volume. From the favour shown me, I have concluded to begin a second. It is a pleasant thing to have our lonely labours helped on by the remembrance that they have met with kind encouragement, and the belief that they will meet with still more ; and I shall return to my work with a cheerfulness, which I knew nothing of when I set out.

THE AUTHOR.



## THOMAS THORNTON.==

—and prudent counsels fled;  
And bounteous Fancy, for his glowing mind,  
Wrought various scenes, and all of glorious kind.  
*Crabbe.*

—Remote  
—defeated pride,  
Prosperity subverted, maddening want,  
Friendship betrayed, affection unreturned,  
Love with despair, or grief in agony.  
*Wordsworth.*

Or to the restless sea and roaring wind,  
Gave the strong yearnings of aagin'd mind.  
*Crabbe.*

“WHY, Mr. Thornton, are you dreaming?” said  
Mrs. Thornton, trying to appear easy, and drop-  
ping her lap her work, which she had not set  
a stitch to for the last half hour.—“I can’t see to  
thread my needle, for the wick has run up, till it  
looks like a very cock’s comb, and the fire has  
got so low, that I hardly feel the end of my  
fingers. It’s exceedingly chilly about the room—  
pray give me my shawl, or I shall perish.”

“Do as other wise people do, my dear,—look  
back a little, and you’ll find your shawl on the  
bars of your chair. As to the candle, I’ll see to

that ; and if I could take the coxcomb from our Tom's head as easily, it would be equally well for your sight."

"Ha ! ha ! Now, Mr. Thornton, you shouldn't try to be witty when you're vexed. You don't know what bungling work angry folks make at humour."

"True, my dear,—much the same as fond ones at government."

Mr. Thornton took his feet down from the side of the fire-place, put his spectacles on his nose, at the same time looking sharply through them, with both his gray eyebrows thrown into double arches.

"Upon my word, Mr. Thornton, I'm glad you're at home again ; for you sat there, ~~playing~~ your spectacles between your fingers, ~~and~~ ing but a gruff hum, now and then, as if you were miles off in the woods, and contriving how to clear your wild lands."

"I've enough growing wild at my own door to see to, without taking to the woods, and harder to bring into order, than any soil my trees grow upon, however stubborn."

Mrs. Thornton saw that she could not rid herself of the difficulty by laughing. She

coloured and remained silent. She was conscious of being too indulgent to her son ; and might, perhaps, have been brought to a wiser course towards him, had not her husband's impatience of her weakness, and vehement opposition to her folly, and a consequent harshness in his bearing towards Tom, created a kind of party feeling within her, which, with a common sort of sophistry, she resolved wholly into pity for her child. This was a bad situation for the boy, for the weakness of his mother's conduct was easily perceived by him, and looked upon with a little of contempt, at the same time that it made for his convenience ; while his father's sternness, which kept him in check, and which he would gladly have been rid of, commanded his respect. This led him to like what was agreeable, rather than what was right, and to lose all distinction of principle in self-gratification. And though all selfishness hardens the heart, there is nothing which turns it so soon to stone, as a contempt for those who love us, and are fondly, though unwisely, contributing to our pleasures. To hate our enemies is not so bad as to despise our friends. The cold, hard triumph of prosperity is a worse sin than that

which eats into us in the rancour of adversity ; and it is more deceptive too ; for good fortune has something joyous in it, even to the morose, who oftentimes mistake their gladness for a general good will, and play with the miseries of some, to make others laugh.

Even vehement and inconsiderate tempers, who take fire as quick in another's cause as in their own, lose their generosity, where too much is ministered to their will ; and what was only a warm resentment of another's wrong, may come to be nothing else, but a feeling of power and a love of victory. |

Mr. Thornton saw the confused expression in his wife's face, and his sharp, sudden look relaxed into one of mild and melancholy reproach, while she sat pricking her finger, as she tried to seem to be intently hurrying on her work. He pulled out his watch, and continued looking at it some time, taking an uneasy kind of delight in seeing the minute hand go forward, and wishing it later.

"It is not very late, I hope, Mr. Thornton."

"O, no,—but a little past twelve—a very reasonable hour for a boy to be out—and at a cockfight, too."

"But, Mr. Thornton, had you heard how earnestly he importuned me, you would not wonder I gave him leave. He promised to return early. But boys, you know, never think of time when about their amusements."

"It is not of much consequence that they should, when their amusements are so humane and innocent. A cockpit must be an excellent school for a lad of Tom's mild disposition."

Some couples have particular points of union, but more have those of disagreement; and from the frequency with which both return to their several kinds, it would be hard to tell which afford the most pleasure.

There was but one subject on which Mr. and Mrs. Thornton were at odds with each other, but to make up for the want of more, it was one of very frequent occurrence; and had not Tom suddenly made his appearance, there is no knowing how far the bitter taunting of the old gentleman would have gone at this time.

Tom entered the room, his crisped, black hair off his forehead, his swarthy complexion flushed with excitement from the desperate conflict he had just witnessed; his mouth firmly set, his nostrils expanded, and his eye fiery and



dilated. He had a strong cast of features, the muscles of his face always working, and his movements hasty, impetuous, and threatening. His countenance was open and manly, and it seemed to depend upon the turn of circumstances whether he was to make a good, or a bad man. He was surprised, and a little abashed for a moment, at finding his father up. He looked at his mother, as if to say she had betrayed him; and his mother looked at him, as if to upbraid him for breaking his word by staying so late, and thus bringing his father's displeasure upon both.

"I suppose that I may go to bed now, as you have seen fit to return home at last, my young gentleman? And did you bet on the winning cock, or are you to draw on me to pay off your debt of honour?"

"I betted no higher than I had money to pay;" answered Tom, proudly: "and I care not if I go with an empty pocket for a month to come," (his face brightening) "for he was a right gallant fellow I lost upon."

Angry as his father was, the careless generosity of Tom's manner touched his pride.—  
"You are malapert. But this comes of late

hours, and dissipation. We'll have no more of it. Get you to bed, Sir ; and look to it that you do not gaff the old rooster,—I'll have no blood spilt on my grounds."

"Never without your leave, Sir," said Tom, in a humble tone, his mouth drawing into a smile at his father's ignorance. And glad to be let off so easily, he went to bed, laughing at the thoughts of their old dunghill, blind of one eye, dying game. "They must have been but simple lads in my father's day," said Tom to himself, as he blew out his candle, and threw himself into bed to dream over the fight.

"Tom is not so bad a boy, neither," said Mr. Thornton, putting the fender before the fire, and preparing to go to bed. "And I see not why he shouldn't make a proper man enough, were there no one to take all the pains in the world to spoil him."

In a few minutes all was quiet in the house.

Tom had now reached that age, in which it is pretty well determined whether the passions are to be our masters or servants. He had never thought for a moment of checking his; and if they were less violent at one time than another, it was because he was swayed for the

instant by some gentler impulse, and not that he was restrained by principle. His father's late mild treatment of him seemed to have a softening effect upon his disposition, and for a few days he appeared perfectly at rest and free from starts of passion. But some little incidents soon brought back his father's severity of manner, and this the son's spirit of opposition; and the mother's weakness was a constant temptation to his love of power. Every day occasioned a fresh difficulty. Tom decided all the disputes in the school, it mattered little with him whether by force or persuasion. And as he feared no one living, and generally sided with the weakest, partly from a love of displaying his daring and prowess, and partly from a hatred of all tyranny but his own, he frequently came home with his clothes torn and face bloody and bruised. This, however, might be said for Tom, he was always the favourite of the smaller boys. He cared not to oppress, where it showed neither courage nor skill. His poor mother was filled with constant trembling and alarm for him. This was an amusement to him; and, from the most violent rage after one of these contests, he often broke out into a loud laugh at

the plaintive sound of his mother's lament over him. Amongst Tom's other accomplishments, he was a great *whip*. So without saying a word to any one, he contrived, with the assistance of a schoolfellow as wild as himself, to put a young, fiery horse, which his father had just purchased, to a new gig. The horse was restiff—Tom grew angry and beat him—his companion was thrown out, and broke his arm; but Tom, with the usual success of the active and daring, cleared himself unhurt. The carriage, however, was dashed to pieces, and his father's fine horse ruined.

Not long after this, and before his father's anger had time to cool, Tom, with some of his play-mates, was concerned in breaking the windows of a miserly neighbour, that they might make him loosen his purse strings for once. One of the smallest boys was detected, and upon refusing to give information of the rest, the master began flogging him severely. Tom would have taken the whipping himself, but he knew this would not save the lad, unless he made the others known; besides, he had an utter detestation of mean and cowardly acts, and could not brook that the little fellow should be punished for not turning traitor. Tom sprung

upon his seat, and crying out, "a rescue!" was followed by the other boys, and in an instant the master was brought to the floor. Lying upon one's back is not a favourable posture for dignity—certainly not in a schoolmaster. Though a good deal intimidated, the master frowned and threatened; but Tom was not to be frightened at words and looks. Indeed the ludicrous situation of his instructor, the novelty of it, and his mock authority, put Tom into such a fit of laughter, that he could hardly give his conditions of release. There was nothing but shouting and uproar through the school. And it was not till a promise of full pardon to all concerned, that the master was allowed to rise.

Tom knew that this would end his school-boy days, and so far, he was not sorry for what had happened; for he longed to be free and abroad amidst the adventures of the world. "Let it all go," said he, walking forward with a full swing; "if I have been wild and headstrong, I have not wasted my time. And I'll do better my instruction, that I will one day be amongst men, what I have been amongst boys. And who will then dare say, nay, to Tom Thornton?"

As he came in sight of the house, he slackened his pace; and forgetting his distant views of power, began to consider how he should meet his father.

“It will be all out in less than four and twenty hours. I had better then have the merit of telling it myself. This will go some ways towards my pardon; for the old man, with all his severity, likes openness,—it has saved me many a whipping, when I was younger. So, thou almost only virtue I possess, let me make the most of thee while thou stick-est by me.”

Hé was, indeed, a forthright lad, not because he considered openness a virtue, but because it agreed with the vehemence and daring of his character, and gratified his pride.

With all his self reliance, his heart beat quick as he drew near the door. He thought of his father's strict notions of government, his own numerous offences of late, the sternness and quickness of his father's temper, and the violence and obstinacy of his own; and he could not but dread the consequences of the meeting.

“Why should I stand like a coward, arguing the matter with myself, when I know well

enough that there is but one way of acting? The sooner begun, the sooner over, and the worst has an end."

So saying, he threw open the door, and went directly to his father's room. Mr. Thornton was not there. He passed hastily from one room to another, as in pursuit of some one who was trying to escape him, and inquiring quickly of every body he met, for his father. He at last went to his mother's chamber, and knocking, but scarcely waiting for an answer, entered it and asked abruptly, "where is he?"

"Who, my dear?"

"Dear me no dears, I'm not in a humour for it. Where's my father?"

"Your father, child! He's gone to the village. But what's the matter? Something dreadful, I'm sure. O, Thomas, you make my life miserable."

"Humph!" said Tom, after a pause, and drawing his lips close together. "Gone to the village! Then every old woman in it has blabbed it over and over again in his ears long ago, and with a thousand lies tacked to it, and as many condolences about his hotheaded son; and nothing puts my father into such a fury as

the whining of these old crones. Ah, I see the jig's up, and all my honesty comes to nothing. Well, it can't be helped,—I see it coming."

"What can't be helped? Why don't you speak to me, Thomas, and tell me what's the matter?"

"Ah! mother, is it you?—I was thinking about.—What's the matter, ask you? Matter enough, truly. There's young Star sold for a lame cart-horse—a gallant fiery steed you were too, poor Star—the gay furbished gig, dashed into as many fragments as your chandelier, and gone with Pharaoh's chariot wheels, for aught I know. Mother, I've been in too great a hurry ever since, to ask your pardon for running foul your chandelier yesterday. But father came in so close upon me, he liked to have cut his foot with the pieces. There's another mark to my list of sins. Then there's the breaking of Jack's head for not minding me instead of my father, and a score more of worse things, and all within these six days."

"O, Thomas, Thomas, what will become of us?"

"Become of *us*? Why, 'tis none of your doings, Mother. You never broke the gig, or



lamed Star, or cudgeled Jack, that I know of. But stop your grief awhile, for the worst is behind."

"Worse, Thomas! I shall lose my senses. Your father mutters about you in his very sleep; and he has threatened of late to send you out of the house, if you go on at such a rate."

"I know it. Yet I hardly think he would turn me adrift. What if he does? There is room enough; and come fair or foul, I've a ready hand and a stout heart."

"You will certainly kill your unhappy mother if you talk so. Your father says your conduct is all owing to my indulgence, and you have no gratitude or pity for me."

"In faith, Mother, I fear father has the right on't. Come, come, don't make yourself miserable about such an overgrown boy as I am, and I'll tell the rest of my story.

"Mother, I'm a rebel and an outlaw, and the worst of it is, my father's notions of government are as high as the Grand Turk's. Yes, we had old pedagogue flat on his back; and he could no more turn over than a turtle. And when we let him up, he trembled, every joint of him,

knees and elbows, with his fingers hanging straight down like dipped candles."

Here Tom fell a laughing, and his mother burst into tears. Though her weak fondness for him took away nearly all respect for his mother, still Tom loved her, and often blamed himself severely, that he had given her so much trouble, and so often brought upon her his father's displeasure. His heart was touched; and taking her hand, he asked forgiveness for trifling with her feelings. "Do not think that it is because I am careless of what concerns you. You see I play the fool with my own troubles, and I certainly am not indifferent about them."

"I know it, my son. But you will meet with nothing except evil in life, if you do not learn prudence and self-control. You have a good heart, I believe; yet you are giving constant pain and anxiety to your best friends, and must, so long as your passions are your masters, and you, violent and changing as the sea."

Her son promised to set seriously about subduing his passions, and letting his reason have more sway.

As Tom conjectured, Mr. Thornton heard the whole story, and with the usual country village colouring. It was too much for his irascible temper, goaded as it had been of late by his son's inconsiderate conduct. He set off home in great wrath, hurrying over Tom's misdeeds so rapidly and disorderly, that a dozen multiplied and changed places with such swiftness, they showed like a thousand. With his mind thus filled with blind rage, and his body fevered with the speed with which he walked, he entered the house, a very unfit subject for Tom to begin the exercise of his new resolutions upon.

Tom had seen his father coming along the road, and had gone to his room waiting his arrival with a determination to relate the whole affair, confess his error in this and other instances, make known his resolution to change his conduct, and humbly ask forgiveness for the past, and all in a dutiful and composed manner.

Mr. Thornton seized the latch, but with a hand so shaking with rage, that it did not rise at his touch. Heated and impatient as he was, the least thing was enough to make him furious;

he thrust his foot against the door,—it started the catch, and sent it half across the room. The passing sense of shame at his uncontrolled passion only increased his anger; and seeing his son standing in the middle of the room,—“Blockhead,” he cried, darting forward, and with his face almost touching Tom’s, and his clenched fists prest convulsively against his thighs,—“blockhead, dare you fasten me out of my own room?”

The unexpected violence of Mr. Thornton’s manner rather surprised than irritated Tom, and he looked at his father with a composed and slightly contemptuous cast of expression, without making any reply.

Mr. Thornton was sensible how groundless his charge was, the instant he uttered it. He was for a moment discomposed, too, by his son’s calm and haughty bearing; and probably would have been glad, had Tom answered as he sometimes did.

“Do you stand there to insult me, Sir? You would whip all <sup>our</sup> peace, for what could you till he left a soul in <sup>and</sup> rebellious conduct?”  
“—ing your door, Sir?”

own! I'll bow to none but him that made me, no help——"

"Hold, hold, said the father; (whose passions were now at their utmost,) have a care before you take an oath on't; for, as I live, you're no longer son of mine, unless you do it."

"Then I'm my own master, and the ground I stand on is my own; for, by my right hand, I'll ask forgiveness of no man living," said Tom, turning resolutely away from his father, as if all was ended.

"Mad wretch," called out his father, "hear me now for the last time; for unless you this instant promise to obey, I'll never set eyes on you more,—and leave this house you shall by tomorrow's light."

"'Tis a bright night," said Tom, looking composedly out of the window, "and the stars will serve as well. I'll not eat nor sleep where I am not welcome," said he, taking up his hat and walking deliberately out of the room. /

His determined manner at once satisfied Mr. Thornton that Tom would act up to what he had said; and a father's feelings for the moment took possession of him, with compunction for the violence which had driven his son from him.

He went towards the door to call Tom back, but he was already out of hearing.—“Wilful and headstrong boy,” said the old man, turning and shutting the door after him with a feeling of disappointment, “time and suffering alone can cure you.” Thus for the time he eased his conscience, and was saved the sacrifice of his pride.

Tom was passing through the entry with a hasty step, and had nearly reached the outer door, when the light caught his eye, as it shone from under the parlour door. The sight in an instant recalled him to himself, and stirred every home feeling within him. He heard his mother’s voice as she was reading aloud. The blood throbbed violently to his very throat. The thought that she should be so tranquil, and so unconscious of the affliction that was ready to break upon her, cut him to the heart. If she had been a human victim which he was about to sacrifice, he could not have felt more remorse. He listened a moment. “I must not go without seeing her, without taking her blessing with me,—else I shall go accurst!” He laid his hand upon the latch and raised it a little,—his mother still read on.

With all his violence and rudeness, Tom had a strong affection for his mother. His feelings were softened, and he was humbled and pained at reflecting upon the unjust violence of a father, who, though of a stern and hasty temper, he had heretofore respected. To a mind not wholly depraved, the faults of a parent are almost as mortifying and wounding as its own; and Tom would have given the world, if the wrong had now been in himself alone. "I dare not trust myself to see my mother now. She would make a very child of me, my father would be sued too, and then what becomes of all my resolutions and decision!" "Pshaw," said he, dashing away a tear with one hand, as the other dropped from the latch, "is this the way for one like me to begin the world?" He walked slowly out of the house, and drew the door to gently after him, and passed down the yard, unconscious that he was moving forward till he reached the gate. He opened it mechanically, then leaning over it, looked towards his home. "'Tis an ill parting with you, this," said he; "yet I leave you not in anger. Many a blessing I have had, and many a happy time on't, and many more there might have been for me, had

I not been a froward child. There are few such to come, I fear." He stood with his eyes fixed on the house, while his mind wandered over the past, and what awaited him. The light flashed out cheerfully upon the trees near the window, and their leaves twinkled brightly in it. He cast his eyes round, but the earth looked gloomy in the darkness, for no lights were to be seen but those of the distant stars. "I said that ye would serve me," said he, looking upward, "and if I spoke in anger, Heaven forgive me for it. I must be on my way, and must go like a man."

In the midst of the most violent passions, it is curious to see how quickly and with what care the mind will sometimes lay its plans for future resources. Thomas Thornton, when much younger than at this time, had been made a pet, that he might be used as an instrument, by a lad a little older than himself, of the name of Isaac Beckford. Isaac plotted most of the mischief done at school, and applauded Tom for his sagacity and intrepidity in the execution, always taking care not to demand any praise for his own ingenious contrivances. They in this way became necessary to each other, and after



Isaac left school to reside in the city with his uncle, of the same name, and whose ward he was, he wrote frequently to Tom, urging him to come to town, and share in the amusements in which a large fortune would soon enable Isaac to indulge. Tom now resolved to make his way to the city and have the benefit of his friend's influence to put himself in a situation to be distinguished in the world.

Having made up his mind, though it was somewhat of a journey on foot to the city, and he wholly ignorant of the way, (the village in which he resided lying far off from any great road) Tom marched forward as confidently as if the church spires of the town had been in sight. The character of adventure, freedom and novelty in his condition, the sharp, clear night air, and the crowd and glitter of the stars in the sky, gave an expanse and vivid action to his mind, and roused up the hopeful spirit which for a time had slept within him. "Come, come," said he to himself, "you're a tall boy, Tom, better fitted to shoulder your way through the world, than delve Greek under a starvling pedant."

So intent was he upon his schemes, that he took little heed to the by-road he was travelling, and had walked till near midnight without being conscious of time or fatigue. The perfect stillness about him at last drew his attention, and looking round, he found himself on the top of a small hill in the midst of a country perfectly barren, broken into knolls, and covered, as far as the eye could reach, with large, loose stones. An old tree, at a distance, was all that showed life had ever been here; and that with its sharp, scraggy, and barkless, gray branches shooting out uncouthly towards the sky, looked like a thing accurst.—“A hard and lonely life you must have had of it here,” said Tom, “and been sadly off for music, if you were at all particular about it; for I doubt whether any sound has been heard for a long time in your branches, but that of the ravens and the heavy winds. It is as deadly still all around here, as the sky; I wish I could say it looked as well.—What a pity that gibbets are out of fashion, for this would be a choice place for them; and could I but hear the creaking of one, I should not have my ears so palsied with this dreadful, intense silence.—There winds a yellow cart-track from

hill to hill, as far as I can see—it's to the left, and omens ill. I'll take this that turns to the right—whether to the world's end or not, time will tell."

And forward he went. He at last grew weary; and as his pace slackened, he began to think of his home, his father and mother, and his many offences. His conscience was touched, and he felt as if undeserving the light of the quiet heavens that shone on him.—"Can one prosper," said he, "as he goes, when his father's anger and mother's grief follow him?"—His heart began to fail, and a thought passed him of trying to find his way back.—"What, and have my father taunt me, and call me a lad of metal? And how like a whipped dog I should look, crawling up the yard! And then that forked master, and his pardon!" cried Tom, clinching his fists till the nails nearly brought blood, and muttering a curse between his teeth, as the tears started to his eyes part in grief and part in unsated rage.—"Would that I had you in my grapple once more, you soulless wretch, and you should never make mischief between men again,—you mere thing!—What, return to all that! No, in faith, I'd sooner be thrown out here like a

dead beast, and lie till all the bones in this body were as bare and white as these stones, e'er I'd go back so."

He travelled on, not rapidly, but with a loose, irregular step. Sustaining and hopeful feelings had left him, and melancholy and self-accusing thoughts were passing in his soul; yet his mind was made up, and supported by a kind of dogged obstinacy.—"There will be no end to this track, as I see. It winds round and over these thousand hills, as if it were delighted at getting into so pleasant a country." He continued his rout.—"Must my voice lose itself forever in the solitude of this stillness? Is there a doom of eternal silence on all things, wherever I go? Will nothing speak to me?"—Presently he heard a low, rumbling sound, as in the earth under his feet. He started, but recovering himself, walked on. It increased to a surly growl, and seemed to spread underneath the hills and through the hollows; and the earth jarred.—"Does nature make experiments with her earthquakes in this out-of-the-way place, before she overturns cities with them?" said he, with a bitter scoff, feeling how little he cared at the moment for what might happen to him.

As he came round a hill, the sound opened distinctly upon him, sending up its roar into the air ; and raising his eyes, he saw at a distance a tall, giant pile, looking almost black against the sky.—“So, my earthquake turns out to be nothing but a waterfall. And why can’t I be fooled again, and be made to believe that clumsy factory, the huge castle of some big, hairy manslayer and violater of damsels? What, shall I be down-hearted now in my need—I who have carried a confident brow and a firm breast against whatever opposed me? It must be that I need food, else how could I be so melancholy? I’ll have that and sleep too before long, and a fresh body and bright morning to start with tomorrow.”

So saying, he took his way toward the building. The path led him to the stream just above the fall. It lay still and glassy to the very edge of the precipice, down which it flung itself, roaring and foaming. The trees and bushes hung lightly over it, and the stars looked as thick in its depths, as in the sky above him. He was about resting himself upon a stone ; but turning, he saw it was a grave-stone.—“It is a holy thing,” said he, “and I will rest

myself elsewhere.”—He looked round,—there was not another grave in sight.—“What, all alone,” said he, “no companions in death? Though we hold not communion with each other in the grave, yet there is something awful in the thought of being laid in the ground away from the dwellings of all the living, and not even the dead by our side. But thou hast chosen thy habitation well, for this stream shall sing a holier and longer dirge by thee, than ever went up from man; yet this shall, one day be still, and its waters dried up; but the spirit that was in thee shall live with God.”

He passed along the race-way. The water had left it, the grass was growing here and there in little clumps in its gravelly bottom, its planks and timbers forced up, forked out like a wreck, and the huge wheel, which had parted from its axle, lay broken and aslant the chasm. He looked towards the building. The moon, which was just rising behind it, and shining through its windows, made it appear like some monster with a thousand eyes. Its door-path had grown up, and nothing was heard but the wind passing through its empty length, and here and there the flapping of a window. He went round it, and saw

at a little distance, four or five long, low buildings standing without order, upon a rising ground, without fence or tree, or any thing near them but short, withered grass.—“One would have thought,” said Tom, “that nature had done enough without art’s coming in to help the desolation. Not a light hereabouts. This seems not much like either bed or supper.” He looked in at one house, then another, but nothing was to be seen except bare plastered walls. At last, from one of the houses he spied a light gleaming through a crevice. The sight warmed his heart. He went to the door, and knocked.

“Who’s there?” said one in a female voice.

“A friend.”

“More foes than friends abroad at this hour, belike,” replied the person within.

“I’ve lost my way,” said Tom. “No harm shall come to you, good woman, by letting in a traveller.”

“You promise well and in an honest voice,” said she, as she opened the door. The light shone upon her, and Tom saw before him a tall, masculine woman, with strong features, but with a serious and subdued cast of countenance.

"Who are you, young man? Out on no good intent, I fear, at this time o'night."

"I'm Thornton of Thorntonville," said Tom, with his usual readiness, "an you've ever heard of the place. I was going to the city afoot for once, and have missed my way."

"Thornton of Thorntonville," said the old woman, seeming to recollect herself, "I've seen your father, then, down at the big house yonder. Come in."

"Your fire is comforting," said Tom, sitting down by it, "and it is the first comfortable thing I've met with these long four hours past. But you have made an odd choice of situations, my good woman."

"The poor have not often their choice," said she. "And there are things sometimes which make the bare heath dearer to us than garden or park."

"They are sad things then," said Tom.

"Sad indeed," said the old woman, looking into the fire. She sat silent a little time; then breathing forth a low sigh that seemed to relieve the bosom of its aching, she said to Tom, "you must be over weary, and hungry too, if you are from Thorntonville to-day, for 'tis a long walk :



and you must have come over the heath ; and one may stand there as at sea,—hill after hill, like thousands of waves, and not a living thing on one of them all, till they run into the very sky. Wide as it is, it would hardly find summer feed for my old Jenny, were it not for the circle of grass that trims round a gray stone here and there.”

“ There is not much to be said for its appearance,” replied Tom. “ I’m not a little tired, too ; and though I can’t well tell how far I’ve walked, there was not a streaked cloud in the sky when I left home.”

“ It must have been a quick foot and a light heart that brought you so long a way in so short a time,” said she, as she was getting ready a bowl of bread and milk. “ The young hurry on, as if life would ne’er run out ; yet many fall by the way ; and I’ve lived to lay those in the ground, whom I looked to have had one day put the sod on this gray head.”

Tom’s thoughts had gone home, but the old woman’s last words were sounding in his ears. “ And who will do that last office for me, or for them ?” thought he. She saw the gloom over Tom’s face ; and believing she had caused it—

"never mind," she said, "the complainings of one whose troubles are nigh over. Here!" giving Tom the bowl,—“you have but one dish to supper, yet that good of its kind; for 'tis short feed that makes the richest milk.”

"Whose is that huge building to the left, that creaks like a tavern sign?" asked Tom.

"It was his who would have made money out of moonshine. But he has gone before his works."

"And they did not bury him yonder to mock him, I trust?"

"O, no," said the old woman, her lips trembling, and a flush crossing her face, "she that I laid there, had no schemes of grandeur; for Sally Wentworth was of a meek and simple heart."

"Forgive me," said Tom, "I should not have spoken of this, had I known how near it was to you."

"You have no forgiveness to ask of me," said the mother; "I'm a lone woman, and there seldom passes here one who cares to be troubled with my griefs; and it is moisture to this dried heart to talk to one who can feel for my afflictions; for Sally was not only my child, but

God has seldom blessed a mother with such a child. And when he took from me my husband, I hope I did not forget his goodness in what he left to me ; yet he saw fit to call her too, and his will be done. If grief had not killed her, I could bear my lot better. But how could it be else, when he that she loved was so cruelly taken from her ?”

“ She died of love then ?” said Tom. “ ’Tis a death seldom met with, and bespeaks a rare mind.”

“ I know it,” replied the mother. “ True love is a peculiar and a holy thing ; yet those are said to love, who can lay one in the ground, and look fondly on another. O, I have seen it, and it has made me shudder when I have thought of those in the grave. Yes, and many too would scoff at them that were true to the dead ; yet they would not, were it given them to know that the grief of such had that in it which was dearer and better than all their joy. My Sally knew it, and it has made her a spirit in heaven. I sit and think over all that happened, but there is not a soul on earth to whom I can tell it.”

“ If you could think me worthy of it,” said Tom, “ I would ask you to tell me her story.”

"'Tis a sad one, but will not hold you long," said the mother ; "for Sally's life was a short and simple one. She was to have been married to an industrious and kind hearted lad. They knew each other when quite children ; and grew more and more into a love for each other as they grew in years. And if their attachment did not shew the breaks and passions of those which happen later, it was, I think, deeper seated in its quiet, and seemed to be a part of the existence of both of them. Could you have seen them, as I have, sitting on that very form where you now are, so gentle and happy in each other, you would not wonder that it wrings my heart, now they are both gone from me. But there was a snake crawling and shining in the grass. His eye fell before the pure eye of Sally, yet he could not give over. I dare not speak his name, lest I should curse him, and Sally forgave him, and prayed for his soul on her death bed. The Evil One was busy in his heart, and thwarted and enraged, with his passions wrought up, he attempted that by force, which he did not dare name to her. Though she was of a gentle make, there was no want of spirit in her, and the wretch liked to have fallen by her hand. 'Thank

God,' she has said to me, 'that I did not take his life.'

"She came home, shaking and pale with what had happened, and frightened at the danger she had escaped. Frank met her at the door, and asking her eagerly what was the matter, she hinted, hastily, enough for him to guess the rest. He sprang from the door, with an oath—the first that I ever heard him utter.—She called loudly after him, but he was out of sight in an instant. She looked the way he had gone, almost breathless. 'I spared him,' said she, at last, 'but he may not—he may not.' It was but a little while before Frank came home. He staggered into the house, and fell back into a chair. 'What have you done? Speak, tell me what you have done,' cried Sally. 'You have not, you have not murdered'—Frank grasped his throat, to stop its beating. 'No, no,' said he, scarcely to be heard. 'I struck him but once, and he lay like a dead body before me; and I thought it was all over with him; but he presently opened his eyes upon me, and I dared not stay, for I felt the spirit of a murderer at my heart.' He looked, at the moment," said the old woman, "as if he dropped the very knife from his hand.

“And here,” said she, “the storm began to gather fast and hard. The coward villain found means to raise suspicions against Frank, which threw him out of his employments. Yet so secret was he, as not to be suspected of the deed. The poor fellow wandered over these bare hills day after day, without knowing what to turn his hands to. In the midst of all this trouble the wretch came to him, and begged forgiveness for his conduct to Sally. ‘I can forgive you,’ said Frank, ‘but I do not like looking upon you.’ ‘That is not forgiveness,’ said he, in a mournful and beseeching tone. ‘I was a villain, for I would have done you an injury past remedy. And it was more than I deserved, that you should have spared my life when I was down. I have not had a quiet rest since that time, and never shall, if you don’t suffer me to do something to make amends.’ ‘The best amends,’ said Frank, ‘will be a better life in you.’ ‘I know it,’ he answered, ‘and I hope it will be so, if remorse can give it. But you, too, must give me ease. Though young, my allowance is large. Some evil mind has worked you mischief, I’m told, and you are poor. I do not ask you to take my money as your own—I have no right to. But

do at least show me that you have so far forgiven me, as to suffer me to lend it you, and see you well established in your trade. It is the only atonement left me, and you will not cut me off from that.' Frank refused, and the villain begged like a slave. Frank began to think it was sinful pride, and he thought of Sally, and then he consented. The money was lent, and as soon as Frank had laid it out in stock for trade, the note was put in suit, and he was stripped of all he had and thrown into gaol. Frank found a friend who released him ; and he went to sea. And think," said she, turning to Tom, " he that contrived it all was scarcely older than you are now ; and yet he wears a gay heart and fair outside.

" I need not tell of the parting. It was a bitter one, and no meeting after it. There was a storm at sea, and the ship went down. And many a night have I lain and seen his body heaved up wave after wave, as they took it, one after another, till they bore it away, far, far out of sight. The news came at last ; yet she shed no tear, nor spoke a word ; but her silence was awful—it was like a spirit near me. For many days she sat in that corner with her hands

clasped, and resting on her knees, looking with a glazed eye upon the fire ; and I thought I saw her pining away before me as she sat there. At last she would leave the house at night-fall, when it was chilly autumn, and when the crisped, frozen grass would break under her feet. And I have found her standing on the top of the hill near, many and many a night, with her eyes fixed on the moon, her lips moving and giving a low sound, of what, I could not tell. Nor would she look at me, nor mind that I was by. And I have led her home, and laid her shivering in her bed, and she took no heed of me. At last the cold winds and snow struck her ; but as she lay there on the bed, her mind opened,—it did not wander any more. She said that but one being had done her wrong, and though it was an awful wrong, she was sure that she forgave him, and would pray that he might be forgiven.

“Just before she died, she stretched out her hand to me,—she saw me look at it. ‘It was a fresh hand once, but is dead and shrunken now ; and there are the blue veins,’ said she, tracing them with one of her fingers, ‘where the blood used to flow warm and quick, but they are dried up, though they stand out so. I am going to peace,



mother, and to him that loved me.' The tears fell on her pillow, as she said, 'who will take care of you in your old age?' Then looking upward, and with a bright smile over her face, and without turning towards me,—'God, my mother, God will take care of you.' I felt it like a revelation from heaven.

"She died, and I laid her where she wished to be in that grave you saw by the stream,—for you spoke of one, did you not? I bring water from that stream morning and night; and when the weather is calm, I stop and pray at her grave, and in the driving storm I utter my prayer in the spirit, as I pass by,—and with God it is the same, if it comes from a sincere heart. My story is done," said she, in a low tone. "'Tis late, and you have walked far, and there is a clean bed, though a hard one, for you in the next room." Tom wished her good night; but she did not answer him,—he saw that she could not. "O, Isaac Beckford," murmured she, as Tom shut the door, "there is a heavy sin on your soul; may there be mercy in heaven for you." Tom did not hear the name, nor suspect his friend.

Though he rose early, he found breakfast ready. The hostess looked cheerful, for every

affliction has its comfort to the christian.—“And now,” said he, moving back from the table, “how am I to find my way to the city?”

“Look,” said the old woman, going to the door, “yonder you see the wood which borders this heath, and there are the chimnies of Beckford mansion, and the great road winds near it. You will see no smoke there, though a clear morning,—’tis an empty house now. The heath brought you a short rout, for ’tis only a dozen miles, or so, to town. Nigh enough, I fear, to such a place, for one who has passions like yours.”

“What know you of my passions, good woman,” said Tom, “what have you heard of me?”

“Naught in the world. But do I not see them in the moving of your lip, and the gleam of that eye? Rein them with a steady hand, or they may prove of too hot metal for you.” Tom thanked her, and then offered her money. “You came as a cast-away,” said she, “and I cannot take it.” He tendered it again. “No, no,” she said, mournfully, “I cannot take fare-money of one who has listened to my story.” Tom urged her no further, but wishing her, kindly, good morning, sat out on his way. As he drew

near the city, the roads grew crowded, and his spirits rose. "What a mighty stir is here—and what a medley! Things of all sorts, from horse-cart and check frock to coach and laces! And who is merriest of the crowd, it would be hard to tell. At last came the hubbub and rattle of the city. "One needs a speaking trumpet, to be heard here," said Tom.

By dint of inquiry, a quick eye and ready mind, he at last found the street, and the number of the house of Beckford's guardian. The servant made Tom's arrival known to Isaac. "What, my young *protégé*!" exclaimed Isaac to himself—"and in good time; for soon I shall be a free man, and he must minister to my pleasure, as must every one whom I favour. I must see that he is brought up in the way he should go."

With a deliberate step and plotting mind, he walked down stairs; but rushing swiftly into the room, and running to Tom, he seized him round the shoulders, with a hearty God bless you, and how are you, my old buck." This welcome was a cordial to Tom's heart; for, with all his high spirits, the manner of his leaving home, and what he had passed through since, had depressed him and made him thought-

ful ; and he was ill at ease with himself. After many questions about old playmates, and jokes upon past school tricks, Tom told Isaac that he wished to see him where they should not be interrupted.

"To be sure you shall," said Isaac, stepping into a side room, and locking the door after them. "But what is all this for ; you've no game afoot here already, surely ; or has some hare scaped you ? If so, 'tis I must start her again. I've the scent of a hound, Tom."

"A good quality," said Tom ; "not wanted now, however. I'll tell you what it is." And he told the whole story.

"A pretty child you, to quarrel with your bread and butter. A lad of metal truly. But does one show his spirit, for the sake of getting a broken head ? You must put yourself under my care. I see no reason why we can't live pleasantly enough without the old folks, till your father repents ; which I warrant will be shortly. In the mean time," said Isaac, scanning Tom as he spoke, "there must be a change from top to toe."

"I've no money," said Tom.

"I have, though," said Isaac; "so give yourself no concern." Tom coloured. He had not thought of this before. Isaac burst into a loud laugh.

"Give me leave," said he, as soon as he could speak. "Why, you look as you did when caught by your master stealing his rod. There is no other way for you—if you wo'nt suffer me a trifling favour, you must bilk the tailor."

"I tell you what," said Tom; "I would be under such obligations to no man living but you. And I like not that even. Money favours are but poor bonds of friendship."

"Pshaw," said Isaac, "your father will pay all; and should he be stiff about it, if I credit him, and lose, what's that to you? So, now for a merry year or two to come."

"Not so fast," said Tom; "I want your assistance, but in another way. You've influential friends. I did not come here for sport. I'm for sea, and sea-fights." Isaac gave him a questioning look. "'Tis even so, I'm set upon it, Isaac."

"Well then, so be it. But first, come, see my guardian."

Isaac was right in his conjecture about Mr. Thornton. His wife's anxiety concerning the fate of her son, and the reflection that he had been hasty and unjust towards him, led the old gentleman to write Isaac's uncle (he had little doubt whither Tom had gone). Mr. Beckford stated, in his answer, Tom's desire to go into the navy; and it was concluded that Tom should have a moderate supply of money, and be furthered in his intent, without knowing any thing of his father's share in the business. Isaac therefore appeared as principal, and he took care to increase his influence by it; but he could not turn Tom from his purpose, and he did not like to thwart his rich uncle.

Thornton's mind was so full of ships and the seas, of fights and promotion, that Isaac saw it was impossible to sink him in dissipation at once. "Whatever is that lad's object," said Beckford, "is a passion with him for the time. I must give him line."

"Are you going to run me through, Tom?"

"I was only boarding the enemy."

"That coat is of the true cut, Tom."

"It sits no more to the shape of a man, than

to a partridge. When I am admiral, Isaac;—  
as I shall be”——

“God save you, admiral!”

“I’ll do.”

“What will you do?”

“Pay you the tailor’s bill, for having made me such a thing to show clothes on. Let’s to the ship.—She sits on the water,” said Tom, as they were carried towards her, “as if she were born of the sea. And then again so tall, and light, and graceful, she seems a creature of the air.”—

A few days before sailing, he received a guarded letter from his mother. He threw it angrily upon the table. “No, no,” said he to himself, “this was written under the hard eye of my father.” And he wrote an answer full of affection and high hopes.

As Tom had always resolved to command a ship of war, he had made good use of his time at school to learn all but what practice gives. With a quick insight into whatever he turned his attention to, his many and appropriate inquiries and close and wide observation soon made him familiar with all that could be acquired in port, and to be ready for much that the sea would teach him.

There was a stiff breeze and a clear blue sky, and the whole air was raying with the sun, when Tom bade farewell to Isaac. His brave, fiery, open temper, made young Beckford's sly, cautious, and vicious disposition seem despicable and weak even to himself, and he was fixed upon revenge, with a deadly purpose. He was one of that race who carry a hell within them—who, placed in the rank of ordinary beings, and wanting the bold and sustaining spirit of open hostility, bear secret hate to all above them.

"This is life," said Tom, as he stood looking out on the ocean. "The unseen winds make music over-head; the very ship rejoices in the element in which she moves, and the sea on which we are opening, looking limitless as eternity, heaves as if there were life in it."

Tom had high notions of a ship's discipline, and submitted with a good grace. "And so will I be obeyed," said he to himself, "when my turn comes." Though among his fellow-officers his manner was too impetuous, yet there was something so hearty and frank in it, that they could not take offence. He exacted perfect obedience where he commanded, but was free from cruelty. He was continually learning of experienced offi-



cers ; nor did he suffer the slightest thing which could be of use, to escape his observation. They visited foreign ports ; and with a curiosity all alive and perpetually gratified, this earth was like a new world to him.

At last came the news of a war, and Tom rubbed his hands like an epicure over a smoking dinner. "A bloody battle, and I shall mount,—or fall, and another walk over me—all the same to the world." At last was given the cry of, 'a sail ;' and Tom saw a ship ahead rising up, as it were, slowly and steadily out of the sea, as she neared. As she tacked to the wind, he gazed upon her almost with rapture.—"Queen of the sea," cried he, "how silently and beautifully and stately she bears herself!"

"A heavy ship," said an older officer.

"She's a superb bird of passage," answered Tom, "fit messenger for the gods. 'Tis a pity, but we must bring her down."—A distant fire was opened. He looked disappointed and impatient that so little was done.

"You will be gratified to your heart's content presently, young man. We shall have no boys' play to-day."

“Nor do I want it,” he answered. “Let it come hot and heavy.” And his eye brightened and spirits rose, the closer and harder the fight became.

In the midst of this, the enemy’s mainmast swayed once or twice, then came a crash and a cry, and it went by the board. Tom shuddered, and shut his eyes convulsively, as he saw the poor fellows go with it. All was in a moment forgotten, when the ship he was in, falling on the other’s bow, the cry, ‘to board,’ was heard. He jumped upon the enemy’s deck with the spring of a tiger. They gave way. He was foremost through the fight, with a wet brow and clotted hand. In a few minutes the deck was cleared of all but the dead and dying. All was bustle and joy on one side; and Tom’s heart swelled, when the captain in his warmth shook him heartily by the hand. But no one envied him, so meekly did he bear it. He stepped back a little; a dying man gave his last groan at his feet. Tom started, and looking down, saw the sightless, open eyes of the dead man turned up towards him. It shrunk his very heart up. “And has this been my sport?” said he. “God forgive me.” The prize was sent home, and Tom went in

her, second in command, with a favourable notice of his conduct.

"I am worn with this incessant heave of the sea," said Tom, as he hung over the ship's side, "and long to be ashore, and smell the earth again, and mix in the occupations of men. The moon shines as fair here, and looks as happy, showing her dimpled face in the water, as if she had all the world to worship her. The sky and earth hold blessed and silent communion, which we, who crawl about here, think not of. Would I could share in it, and mingle with the air, and be all a sensation too deep for sound—a traveller amongst the stars, and filled with light. I am a thing of clay—a creature of sin," he murmured, as he turned, and went to his cabin.

The rim of the sea was of gold, when the sun was wheeled slowly up, and burnished the whole ocean. The light flashed up into Thornton's cabin windows. His soul enlarged itself as he looked out upon this life of the world. Going upon deck, he found there an officer.

"What, up before me?"

"Yes, I've been watching the harbour light, till it went out like the morning star." Tom

turned, and the gay islands that laid softly upon the sea, looked to him like messengers sent to welcome him to land ; and as he made the shore, the very dark rocks seemed sociable, as if they had come down to meet him. He landed with an exulting spirit amidst the cheers of the populace, and hearty congratulations of the few acquaintances he had formerly left behind. Isaac was not amongst them ; and upon inquiry, Thornton learned that he was out of town at old Mr. Beckford's, late his guardian. As soon as Tom could leave the city, he drove out thither.

As he dashed along with a speed that made the fields and trees appear hurrying by him, he thought of the time when he trudged the same road afoot, and an out-cast, and not noticed of a passer-by. "I always felt that I should rise, and make men look up at me ; and I will be higher yet e'er long. Neither will it be a gallows elevation, as my father prophesied in his anger. What a triumph I have gained over them ! They shall not fail to hear of it in full, and that shortly. What a selfish wretch am I ! Whose hearts, in all the world, will be prouder and gladder than their's at my success ?"—He whirled up the circular way to the house, and sprang to the ground

as light as if buoyed by the air. There was one who saw him from behind the window-curtain. "What a gallant fellow," said she! "He descended to the earth like one of the gods. What a form! Who can it be? It must be young Thornton. Yes, the whole face tallies with what I've heard of his daring and impetuous character. Heigh-ho, I wonder what's become of Mr. Henley. I hope he has not broken his poor neck, and rid himself of his million of complaints at once."

Tom followed the servant, and came so suddenly upon Isaac, that he was not prepared to make his usual demonstrations of joy. Tom felt it for an instant. But Isaac, seeing his error, began repairing it, by asking question after question, hardly giving Tom time to answer one of them, and expressing all the while the warmest joy at his success.

"Well, Tom, half a dozen years have done much for you."

"Yes, and I mean that six to come shall do more."

"Well resolved, as usual, and surely, I've no doubt; for you have fire and skill to melt and cast to your liking. Come along, and take a

look at my fair cousin—cousin I call her, though a third remove. But, have a care, my boy, for her worn out rake of a husband knows what a woman is, and has a lynx's eye."

There is nothing better calculated to put a man in a woman's power, than bidding him be on his guard against her; for he at once imagines that he may be an object of interest to her, and that there is something in her worth being a slave to.

When Thornton entered the room, the sun was down, but the deep clouds were on fire with his light, and threw their warm glow upon a rich crimson sofa, on which rested, clad in white drapery, the beautiful Mrs. Henley. She was leaning on her elbow which sunk into a cushion, raising her a little, giving a luxurious curvature to the body, and showing the limbs in all their fine proportions and fulness. Her wrist, a little bent, shone with a dazzling whiteness, while her fingers were half hid among the leaves of a costly book. Her fairy foot, in a white satin slipper, was playing in the deep flounce of the sofa, and as she rose with a pretended embarrassment, the exquisitely turned ankle glanced for an instant on Thornton's sight. Something shot

through his breast with the acuteness of an electric shock ; and it was with difficulty that he could give utterance to the passing compliments. His confusion was not unobserved by Isaac or the lady ; and they were both determined to turn it to their purpose, but from very different motives.

Mrs. Henley lived in Isaac's neighbourhood long before her marriage ; and her fine person and beautiful face, and the slow, wavy outline which deep passion gave to her movements, had excited in him, to an intense degree, all that he was capable of feeling for a woman. The loose and evil passions were strong in him ; and as he was without true courage, he gratified them by ingenuity and trick. When such persons are understood, the men despise, and the women loathe them. All his endeavours to ingratiate himself with his cousin, only made him the more disgusting to her ; for when he was most intent upon pleasing her, his manner was a mixture of fawning and condescension, which moved her contempt and touched her pride. And sometimes she revenged herself by cold disdain, at others, by turning him to ridicule with her playful and ready wit. But Isaac could submit to be

trodden on, so he could gain his object, or compass his revenge ; and he swore Fanny should be Mrs. Beckford, or rue the day she married another. He had failed in his first purpose, and was now wholly bent on vengeance. He saw the effect that Tom had produced on her, and that he was not untouched. Isaac's plan was formed ; and though he had determined to make Tom a mere instrument for his own end, he hated him for that very preference which had been shown him, though it made him more easily his tool.

Fanny, with all her hate of Isaac, would have been Mrs. Beckford, had no better establishment offered. She was selfish, of strong passions, regardless of principles, of unbounded extravagance and ambition, with a mind somewhat tasteful, yet fond of the showy, of high spirit, and of quick intellect (which, in fashionable society, answers all the purposes of wit,) and with art to appear whatever she chose to be at the time. She was balancing in secret the *pros* and *cons* of a marriage with Isaac, when Mr. Henley, who had wasted one fortune early in life, now suddenly presented himself with a broken constitution and fretful disposition, but



with a large estate, to which he had just succeeded, and she in due time became Mrs. Henley. She soon devoted herself to spending his fortune, and leaving him to his doctor and nurse.

"Why, Tom," said Isaac, in a laughing way, but with a malignant purpose, "you were as careless and easy in company of the ladies before you went to sea, as you were at our whist club; but you look as awkward now as some Jonathan, who is working himself up to a tender of himself and kine, to a country maiden. Does the salt water always have such an effect?"

"If it does," said Fanny, "there are more virtues in a sea voyage than I have before heard of; and it might be a benefit to some whom I had long put down on the list of incurables."

"Why, coz, one so pretty as you should only shoot cupid's arrows, and not wound us with those of wit."

"'Tis pity it should have mischiefed you; I but shot it o'er the house."

"And wounded your brother."

"Something too much akin, that, Isaac."

"Then you are not for the platronics?"

"Not with a handsome youth like you."—  
Isaac bit his lip; and Tom laughed.

"Why, Isaac, did I ever before see you foiled at an encounter of wits? Your's have grown dull since I left you. Have them sharpened—have them sharpened, Isaac."

"So do, Isaac, and on your heart," she whispered, "it will serve."

"I will," he muttered to himself, "and that you shall find to your cost, ye young ones."

At that moment Mr. Henley entered, leaning on the arm of old Mr. Beckford, who, now far advanced in life, was of a cheerful, fresh and benevolent aspect. Mr. Beckford shook Thornton heartily by the hand, and welcomed him well ashore. The other was a tall, stooping, gaunt figure, with a sallow and thin face, dark, hanging eyebrows, and a glancing, cautious eye. With all this, he showed the remains of a handsome person, and was what is commonly called a polished gentleman. He received Tom with a courtly distance.

"My dear," said his wife, affecting concern, "you don't know how uneasy I've been about you."

"Perhaps not," he replied, without regarding her, and in a low monotone, as if talking to himself.

"I'm really afraid you have caught your death this cool evening."

"O, you're too anxious about me; I do not feel myself dying quite yet," he answered in the same manner. Tom ground his teeth against each other, at these surly replies.

They met at breakfast; and the rich evening dress was changed for a simple robe; and Fanny looked as fair as if she had bathed in the dew of roses. When the uncle and husband were out of the way, Isaac gave such a turn to the conversation, as would lead to his object. Then he proposed a walk in the little wood near the house; and when they had entered it, suddenly remembered some particular business, and left Tom and his cousin together. The light shawl caught in the branches, and what less could Tom do, than adjust it carefully over the finest shoulders in the world, unless we except the Venus—but hers are not living shoulders. There was a brook to pass, and an unsightly tree lying rudely across the path, and last of all happened that fatal though common accident—and the shoe lacing was seen trailing the ground.

Before many days Tom had lost all control over himself. He had but one feeling and one thought.

Isaac saw that affairs were going too fast. "The husband will be upon the trail, and the sport will be all up. We must have doublings and crossings!"

The husband was not so quicksighted as Isaac feared. He had always been jealous of his wife, and not without reason. Jealousy, however, like most passions, discriminates but poorly; and Mr. Henley had been as much alarmed and as impatient at little circumstances, a thousand times before, as he was at what was passing now.

The uncle, who was a looker-on, and knew well the wife's character and Tom's ardent temperament, joined with Isaac, though from opposite motives, in urging Tom to hasten his visit to his father, from whom he had received a kind letter calling him home. He had not lost his affection for his parents, but he was completely infatuated. Day after day was fixed for the visit, and it was as many times put off. "I will propose going with him, and to-morrow," said Isaac to himself. "I am not ready for the catastrophe. He must be more in my power. He must rake, he must game, he must want money." For the passion which Isaac saw in

his cousin, for young Thornton, had worked up towards him the hate of a fiend.

After much urging, Tom was ready, and they started. It was in vain that Isaac endeavoured to draw him into conversation. At length his home appeared in sight. It gave Tom the first happy feeling he had been conscious of since leaving Beckford house. It was with sincere joy he saw his parents, and his mother's tears touched his heart. With all his affection, Tom grew restless in a day or two, and pleaded his duties as a reason for his return. The old gentleman had received from Mr. Beckford a letter, hinting at Tom's dangerous situation. He took his son aside, and talked kindly and earnestly with him upon the subject. Tom at first denied that there was any thing to fear.—“Look carefully into your heart,” said his father. Tom did, and then swore that he would think no more of her.—“Oaths will not do it, Tom; the mind must be bent up to fly the temptation, or you run to your ruin.”—Tom promised to himself and to his father that he would; but the next day hastened to it with speed of fire.—“I cannot show her indifference at meeting, but at least I will appear composed,” thought he.

Isaac caught a glimpse of his cousin, and made an excuse for leaving the carriage, before reaching the house. Thornton met her in the entry. She sprang forward towards him; then shrinking back, and glowing with what Tom took for shame, let fall her beautifully fringed lids. He spoke in a tremulous voice. She uttered a broken word or two; then lifting her eyes to his, showed them drinking deep of passion. He would that instant have folded her to him, but a step was heard in the room. He darted out of the house, muttering between his teeth something of his disappointment, and a curse on the fool who caused it.

He walked on, his brain maddened with the tumult of passions within him. He was not sensible whither he was going, till he suddenly saw at his feet the grave of Sally Wentworth. He recoiled from it like a fallen angel from the presence of the holy; and his abominations rose up before him, black and awful. He felt like an out-cast from heaven, as if the very dead condemned him, and shut him out as a creature unfit to lie down in rest with them.

"The dead, the dead, no passions are torturing them; but shall I ever shake off mine?" He

was leaning upon the grave-stone,—his eyes fixed on the grave,—shuddering at his own passions, and thinking on the quiet below him, when some one spoke.—“Thomas Thornton,” said the voice, “it is well for us to be here.” He turned suddenly, and met the solemn, but mild countenance of Sally’s mother. She observed the dark expression of his face.

“That should not be the face of one who holds communion with the dead,” said she. “What ails thee, man,—thou lookest like one condemned for his crimes, yet afraid to die. ’Tis an awful thing so to live, as to fear to die.”

“It is not death I fear, good mother, it is life,—it is myself.”

“And dare ye fear to live, and yet not dread to die, Thornton? There is a double and a woful curse on thee then.”

“Do not curse me, and standing here, too, lest the dead sanction it.”

“No, she that lies here, cursed not him that brought misery upon her. Neither would I, thee. It becomes not us to condemn one another. But I fear for you, Thornton, I fear for you. And did I not, the morning you left me, warn you take heed to your passions?—I cannot talk with

others here," said she, partly to herself, and looking on her daughter's grave.—She turned away, and he followed her.

"I have looked to see you, day after day," she said, as they walked towards the house; "for I have taken more concern in you, than I ever thought to again in fellow mortal. It has been whispered me how you left home the night you knocked at my door; and it did my heart good to hear, a few days ago, that you had gone to see your father and mother. Nor for that alone was I glad, but that it might break the web that I saw a subtle spider weaving over you."—Thornton coloured. "You have not darkened this door," said she, as they drew up to the cottage. "My eye has been upon you, nevertheless, at the house yonder." They both turned towards it.

"'Tis she!" cried out Thornton, "where can she have been?"

"Here, no doubt, and for no good purpose, I fear. For little have I seen of her for months past; and now she has but just missed you," added the old woman, casting a look of rebuke upon Tom. His cheek flushed a deep, burning red; but his eager and impatient eye was



fixed, like a hound in leash, on the figure at a distance. He stood for a moment silent, and leaning forward. "How this heath opens wide, round about her, that the world may see her move! I must be gone, good mother."

"Hold, hold," said the old woman, laying her hand on his arm, and fastening her eye on his fiery countenance, "art mad?"

"Mad? Ah, mad as the winds. She'll be beyond reach instantly. I must go."

"By the spirit of her whose grave you just stood by," said the old woman in a low voice, "I bid you stay." His hands fell powerless, but his eye still rested on the object. She was ascending a rising ground; and as she reached the top of it, and her form appeared against a burnished evening sky, her long purple mantle waving in the winds, "she touches not earth," he cried, "but moves in glory amidst the very clouds."

"Monster!" cried the old woman, in a tone of horror; and, lifting her finger, said, "can you look yonder, and worship any but God?" The voice went through him like a word from heaven.

"Mother, forgive me," said he, humbled and ashamed.

"Ask forgiveness of him you have offended, and not of me." As she looked upon him, her heart yearned towards him as a mother's for her child.—He raised his eyes timidly towards the west once more, but she, whom he sought, had gone down the hill, and was out of sight. His countenance fell.

"Would that she could pass so from your mind!"

"Would that I could be taught to wish it," he murmured.

"Turn then," said she, pointing to the sky, "and learn to love the works, that God has made, and still keeps innocent. They are his messengers to us, the ministers of his power, the revealers of his love for us. To rejoice in them, to feel the heart moved by them, is true worship. O! I have stood, at an hour like this, and looked, till I have thought the light of heaven was opened to me, and God was near me."—She turned once more towards Thornton. His countenance had become calm and elevated.—"My son," said she, "could you learn to fill yourself with such thoughts as are now within you, the allurements

of the world would be a tasteless show to you. But the heart must love something,—it must be sin or goodness.”—There was a short pause. At last said the old woman, “She you hunt after is another’s. She vowed herself his at the altar, and if it is a stain on her soul, would it for that be less a sin in you to wrong him?”

“I would wrong no man,” said Thornton.

“What! can you say how far you will go, when you cannot stop now?”

“I will, I will,” he answered, “even now.”

“Beware that you stumble not through too much confidence. Turn away from the temptation; for she who tempts you, I fear, is eager to draw you on. I would not speak it of her but for your good,” said the old woman, the colour coming to her pale cheek—“for she was my foster-child, and has slept in these arms, and I loved her next to my own. But ambition and vanity and all unchecked passions have been busy at her heart. It was for houses and lands and a high place in the world, that she bartered herself; and she who will do that by holy covenant, may one day do it without bond. You are now going into the world again; but carry with you, if you would have mercy on your soul,

what I have said ; and as you keep it with you, so, I trust, heaven will bless you."


He grasped her hand, and then turned and walked homeward. She looked after him till he was lost in the twilight ; then went into her house with a sunken and misgiving heart.

Thornton went directly to his chamber. He was afraid of Isaac's ridicule, and dared not trust himself with a sight of Mrs. Henley. He was melancholy and humbled ; but there was a virtue in his state of mind, which made him less impatient of himself than he had been for many weeks past. He thought of the widow and her daughter—of death, and what's to come, and his passions subsided, and the storm and wreck of the mind seemed clearing and settling away, and he had the quiet sleep of a good man. But the light and stir of day, which scatter our resolves and fill us with the present, came on ; and the gay and beautiful vision of Fanny broke upon him with the morning sun.

He sprang from bed ; and in his eagerness to hasten down stairs, every thing was out of place, and fretting him with delay. None but domestics were up. He walked out a few steps, and then returned, and thus continued till the break-

fast hour arrived. He met only Mr. Beckford and Isaac at table. His eye was constantly on the door.—“Mr. Henley and lady left us about dusk last night, for the city,” said the old gentleman. Thornton’s countenance changed.—“I fear you will never be a gallant,” said Isaac. “To think that you should not be here, to bid so fair a lady farewell! But you may make such amends as you can, for we all move town-ward to-morrow.”

The next day they reached the city.—“Make yourself ready,” said Isaac, “for we are to go to Henley’s to-night, you know.” As they passed along the streets, the brilliantly lighted shops, the gay faces and talk within them, and then the shadow of some building thrown in straight line across the pavement, and some one stealing through it in silence, gave a sudden contrast, and a strange mixture of open gayety, and mysterious stillness to the scene, which excited Thornton’s mind, at the same time that he felt a cautious fearfulness stealing over him. Then was heard the distant rumbling of a carriage—presently it would shoot by them with a stunning rattling of the wheels, and sharp clatter of the horses’ hoofs, every now and then



striking fire, and all would die away again in the distance and darkness.

They at length reached the superb mansion of Mr. Henley. It was like entering into broad daylight. It shone like the fairy palaces in the Arabian Nights. And there she stood under a large chandelier, richly and splendidly dressed ; her fair skin sparkling with an almost metallic brightness, and her eyes full of light and action. At the first glance she coloured ; but recovering herself with a practised readiness, gave Thornton a frank welcome, at the same time introducing him to the circle about her. Those who observed his confusion, set it down to bashfulness, and as such, passed it by. She was in full spirits, talked much and brilliantly ; and his grand figure and face, his honest vehemence and hearty good nature, drew round them the choicest part of the company. Then came the dance with all its windings and wavy motions, and her soft hand rested too long in his. The fingers of each trembled, and told what they should not. The flame was again lighted up within him, and it rose and swept along with the rush and desolation of a forest fire. He lingered as long as Isaac dared let him ; and was at last half drawn

away by him from the house. He passed the remainder of the night, at one time calling himself a madman and villain, and then, in his hot impatience, swearing that no earthly power should bar him his way. The thought of her now fully possessed him. She saw the power she had over him, and loved it too well to risk it, by too easily yielding to his passion. He had no rest out of her presence, followed her wherever she went, and was at her house, morn- and evening.

"Tom," said Isaac, one day, "do you know that the world begin to talk about you, and my sweet coz?"

"I care not for their talk. What have they to do with me or her?"

"Much, my young blood, so long as you make a part of the world. And it is something to me, Tom, and touches me nearly. You know not your danger; but I must not let you bring disgrace upon any of our relations, however distant. Besides, the husband grows suspicious; and would you spill his blood, or throw so fine a girl out from fortune?"

"God forbid," said he warmly. "Yet, I know not, Isaac,—my power has gone. Save me, save me."

"And so I will, if you'll be a man. We must change the scene; and you shall see some good fellows, and be as merry as ever, I warrant ye. Come along with me."

Tom followed as if all self-will was gone. And he talked and laughed and had his joke, and was called a lad of spirit. He drank to excess, and grew restiff. The cool Isaac kept an eye upon him, without being observed, and took him off in time. "This will suffice for a beginning," said Isaac to himself. "We will minister a little more freely next time."

Thornton waked languid, and full of remorse; still he found himself in a few hours at Henley house. Isaac did not try to prevent it. He was only retarding the accomplishment of Tom's wishes, that he might ruin him altogether. Then came more riot and excess, and lastly, gambling. And Tom played rashly and lost; for he was trying to fly from himself, and cared not for fortune. And Isaac lent him money now and then, and oftener



found other friends to furnish him.—All was ripening for Isaac's purposes.

In the midst of this, Tom received a letter from his father, written in the anguish of the mind, and calling upon his son, if he would not blast an old man's hopes, to leave the city and come to him. The letter spoke of Tom's mother, her distress, and the fondness with which, in the midst of it, she clung to her only child. Tom stamped upon the floor, and tearing his hair in the agony of his feelings, cursed himself as the vilest wretch alive. "I will go to them," cried he, "I'll go, by to-morrow's light." The morning came, and then he thought of taking an eternal farewell and the like. He lingered, and Mrs. Henley's carriage drove by. There was a familiar nod, and a smile, and his resolutions were again gone with the wind. That night he played, and lost, and grew angry almost to madness. Then came a duel,—he was wounded, and called a man of honour.

In a day or two he was able to visit at Henley's. Nothing interests a fashionable woman half so much, as a genteel young fellow with his arm in a sling, particularly if he received his hurt in a duel. Mrs. Henley turned pale when

she saw Thornton, spoke <sup>in a whisper</sup> ~~breathingly~~ of his wound, and asked a thousand kind questions about it.—“The arm hangs a little too low; let me shorten the handkerchief.” And standing before him, her arms were round his neck, as she was trying to untie the knot. Their hearts beat quick. Thornton could control himself no longer, but prest her madly to him. Her head sunk upon his shoulder, while she murmured that he would be her ruin. There were vows of eternal love, and protestations of honour, and an assignation—and all made at once. The last was not kept, for Mr. Henley left town early the next day, compelling his wife to accompany him. He had heard and seen enough to confirm his suspicions. He did not want courage to call Tom out, but relished little the thought of being pointed at as the unhappy man who had been engaged in an affair of honour with his wife’s friend.

When Thornton called in the morning, the house was shut up. He rung, but no one came to the door. After walking some time before the house, he returned to inquire of Isaac whither they had gone. Isaac could only conjecture. Tom uttered the direst imprecations upon the

jealous dolt's head. Isaac affected to be amused at Tom's wrath.

"Why, the wench has jilted you, my young sprig. You stood shill-I shall-I too long." But he bit his lips, and swore inwardly; for all his plotting had come to nothing.—"I'll hunt them the world through," cried Tom, "ere I'll be thus thwarted."

He went to his chamber, and found on his table a letter, showing the greatest alarm in his mother, for his father's life. "What! does death cross between me and her," exclaimed he, wildly. His blood curdled with horror at the thought of what he had uttered.—"She has made me a child of hell," he cried in the agony of the passions fighting within him. "Let me be gone, let me be gone from this place of sin." He reached home in time to close his father's eyes and lay him in his grave. There was something more than grief in him for his father's death. It was the fear that he had hastened it on. "He was proud of me," said Tom to himself, "hair-brained as I was. And I gave him hope, and in the midst of it, let a woman, who perhaps has forgotten me, cut it off; and I've laid him in his grave, sorrowful and disap-

pointed. He had a ~~lot~~ of honour ; and I, who was his son, did all I could to debase him."

The grief of his mother and her imploring helplessness, took Thornton's mind off from its regret and painful thoughts, while it softened his heart, and laid it open to those kind and gentle affections, against which it had for a long time been shut. His manner to her was as mild, and soothing, and regardful, as if no headlong passions had ever stirred him. There was something almost parental in it. And when the time came that he should adjust his father's affairs, in order to go to sea again, he was delicate and generous towards his mother, to an extreme.

When the hour arrived for him to leave her, she hung round him, and wept bitterly. "There is now no one, Thomas, but you left for me, in all the earth, to lean upon ; and my soul cleaves to you as all between me and death. Remember your fond old mother, when you are gone from her. You will think of me on the seas, but, forgive me, Tom, you may not in the city."

"Think not so hardly of me, mother ; my heart is not all seared yet. Can I lose all thought of you any where, when, perhaps," he said,

brushing a tear from his eye, "it is I who have made you so soon to be alone? No, I will remember you not only in sorrow and in hours of solitude and thoughtfulness, but bear you with me in my daily life, and think how dear are a mother's pride and joy in a good son."

And when he left her, he begged her blessing with as submissive and meek a feeling as ever entered man's soul. Intimate affections and beautiful thoughts were forever shooting up within him; but his passions would sweep over them like a strong wind, and leave them torn and dead in the dust.

He reached the city a few days before sailing. His composed, serious manner awed Isaac, and made him hate him more than ever. Thornton discharged his debts contracted with money lenders, and found enough left out of his father's estate to pay Isaac. Isaac would have put off receiving it.—"I shall never forget your kindness, said Tom. But I cannot see why you would keep a friend under such an obligation, and that too unnecessarily, and against his will." Isaac took the money without farther parley, with a resolution of persevering in Tom's ruin,

which, in a good cause, would have done honour to a saint.

Thornton more than once passed Henley house, as he strolled out in the night; and he would stand and look towards it, till the bright figure of her he thought on grew luminous to his mind; and he would follow it till his eyeballs ached, as it past off into the darkness. The passion had been laid for a time, but only to burst out more violently than ever. Before, it took possession of him in the uproar of the mind, but now, it had become mixed with his deepest sensations and most serious purposes.

In a few days the ship bore him from shore. He was gone two years; but in all countries, through the hot and successful fight, in storm and calm, the sense of this woman clung to him like his very being. And when he at last spied the gay city rising as it were out of the water, he leaped, like a child, for joy.—“Neither man, nor land, nor sea, shall keep me from her longer. Some devil may have possessed me, but I cannot, I will not, struggle any more. She’s mine, come on’t what may.”—And he was given over to his terrible passions, with little to thwart

them ; for he found the elegant Mrs. Henley a gay and splendid widow.

Thornton had returned, it was true, without money, but then he had the grandest face and figure in the world, and he was the talk of every body. Besides, as fascinating as the widow was, her character was a little worse than doubtful, and few men liked her extravagant and high spirit.

Isaac put in for her favours, and was repulsed. He was silent, but the wound rankled. Old Mr. Beckford warned Thornton. Tom grew angry and avoided him ; and Isaac helped on the match without appearing to do so. The old gentleman gave Mrs. Thornton notice ; and she wrote her son, imploring him to come to her, or, at least, not to plunge himself headlong into ruin. She called upon him in the name of his father, and as he cared for her life. It was all in vain ; he would hear nothing, he would see nothing ; he was married, and undone.

For a time, all was blaze and motion and sound. No house was furnished like the dashing Mrs. Thornton's, no parties half so splendid. No dinners so costly, and got up in such taste, as the captain's, and no one drove such a four-in-

hand. And if high life may in truth be called life, no one knew how to live better than the Thorntons. But it becomes our disease, it breaks up our thoughts, and kills our hearts, and makes what should be individual and fresh in us, common and stale. Politeness becomes feigning, and the play of the affections is lost in the practice of forms.

Thornton began soon to find it so; and to relieve its satiety, he pushed farther into excesses. A kind of feeling, too, rather than reflection, was growing up in him that beauty, and high spirits, and a bright, ready intellect in a woman, would not stand in the stead of principle, and delicacy, and a fond heart. His pride also was hurt, that instead of being looked up to with kind regard, he was treated rather as an important part in a splendid establishment, that his fine person was praised, and elegant manners admired, and even his very mind valued, just so far as they served for an ornament, and a help to notoriety.

He received frequent letters from his mother complaining of his seldom writing, and his not coming to visit her in her deserted state. She spoke of her low spirits, her feeble health, and



her concern for him. Melancholy reflections were made, of a general nature, but such as he well knew how to apply to himself. He saw that her love of him, her disappointment and anxiety, were wearing her away, and the awful thought that he was hurrying her to the grave, crossed him in all his riot and excess.

The power over himself was gone; he had become the slave of his passions; and they bore him along with a never resting swiftness. He found the woman, for whom he had sacrificed all that was worthy in his character, selfish and regardless of his feelings. The disappointment made him hurry into dissipation with the craving appetite of a diseased man; and Isaac was always a friend at hand, to assist him. His wife was no less extravagant than he; and at last came borrowing and mortgages; and squandering seemed to increase as their fortune lessened. He ran into gaming to retrieve his circumstances, but with galled feelings and fevered brain; and it made his condition the more desperate.

Isaac's spirits rose, as he saw Thornton sinking. He, as before, assisted him in procuring loans, and lent him money besides.—“The day is near,” said Isaac, to himself, “in which I

shall live to see that lordly spirit brought down. And my other end shall be compassed too, let it cost me ever so dear. Yes, my proud madam must be supported in her magnificence; but the scorned and loathed Isaac must be wooed then like the dearest of men. What care I, though she feign it like the commonest of her sex, and curse me in the midst of it, in the bitterness of her heart,—does it not make fuller my revenge !”

And on he went, wily and playfully, to his object. Though he had a spirit of avarice not to be gluttoned, yet he would throw out his wealth like water, to sate his hate or lust. He caused information of Thornton's circumstances to be given to one of the creditors. He took care to be at the house when service was made. Thornton's wrath was beyond all bounds; he threatened the officer's life, swore it was his wife who had brought him to disgrace and ruin, and cursed his folly that he had ever married. She said something sneeringly about half-pay captains. Tom's eyes flashed fire, and Isaac became mediator.—“Upon my word, Thornton, my dear friend, you must command yourself, or this will get wind, and they will all be on you, like harpies. For heaven's sake command your-

self.—My dear Sir, how great is the demand? Upon my soul, no trifling sum. Let me see,—I've a deposit for a certain purpose. I must contrive to meet that in another way; my friend must not be ruined thus." He made himself answerable to the officer.—"And here, Tom, you must give this as hush-money to the man. You have used him too roughly."—This was done in the presence of the wife.

Affairs had now nearly reached the worst. And Thornton's disappointments and troubles had almost made a madman of him. When heated with wine or loss at play, his rage made him dangerous, and he became the dread of his companions. Nothing but Isaac's plausible and smooth manner had any control over him, and with Isaac, Thornton was like a tiger with his keeper.

Old Mr. Beckford, with the best intentions, frequently wrote Tom's mother about him. It only served to hasten the wretched woman's decline, and drive him on the faster, that he might shake off the remorse which his mother's letters caused him.

Isaac never shut his eyes upon his object; and as Tom's utter ruin drew near, and the time had

almost come of fulfilling his plans, and accomplishing his last wish, it required all the hypocrisy of his nature not to break his purpose too soon to the wife. He knew that he had no strong virtue to struggle against, but something nearly as stubborn, a woman's dislike. And he played his part well; he was humble, he was grieved for their situation, he spoke timidly of his long contest with himself to overcome his love for her, and the misery it caused him; and shrunk back when he saw scorn writhing in her lip. Then he spoke of his fortune, and his wish that he had been worthy to have saved such a woman from poverty, and the neglect which a hard world might one day show her. And so he wound his way.

She hid not her contempt from him; she scrupled not to say that it was dread of poverty, and fall from high life, that made her yield to the man she despised—that she had seen through his designs long ago. Still he supplied her with money to support her extravagance; and she made him throw her husband's obligations into the fire before her, with his own hands. She yielded, and the man obtained that for which he

had hunted hard for years, and the devil had his triumph.

It lasted not long. Thornton's suspicions were awakened. He did not burst out in fury. Every passion within him settled down to a deathlike stillness. His mind seemed suddenly to take all the shrewdness and ingenuity of the crazed in effecting their object. And he traced out, step by step, all the windings of the subtle Isaac.

At last, he tracked him to the place of assignation; the entrance was barred. He broke it down with the strength of an enraged giant. Isaac fled through another passage, as Thornton entered. Thornton heeded not his wife; his soul was bent up to one purpose, and that a terrible one, and he saw no other object in the world. He followed with the speed of lightning; but passing swiftly by a narrow, dark side-passage, through which Isaac had escaped, missed his prey. He wound through all the passages of the house, with the eagerness of a blood-hound,—then through the by-lanes of the city, till he reached Beckford's house. He asked of the servants, in a perfectly composed manner, for Mr. Beckford. He had gone

out some time before, and had not returned. Thornton saw that they were not deceiving him. He walked the city the rest of the day, and returned at night to prepare himself for a journey, for he thought Isaac must have left town. In a little while he was ready; but passed the night in further search. In going to and from the house, he did not seem to be sensible of the absence of his wife, or to recollect that he had one.

About dusk the next evening, he learnt that one of Beckford's best horses was missing. In an instant he was mounted, and was soon out of sight of the city. Yet he could only conjecture Isaac's route. He continued his pursuit till about night-fall, in perfect silence, and with his mind full of undefined thoughts of vengeance.

He was riding along a dangerous, narrow track, near the edge of a precipice, at the foot of which was running a swift tide, when, just as he was turning the corner of a rock, his horse's head suddenly crossed the neck of another horse, held by a man who was walking cautiously by his side. Though it was growing dark, and the man was muffled, Thornton knew him the instant his eye fell upon him; and springing to the ground, with a shout, stood full before Isaac.

The great coat fell from Isaac's ashy face. He could neither speak nor move.—“Have I you then,” cried Thornton, grappling the trembling wretch by the throat, and lifting him upright off his feet. He gave a keen glance, for an instant, down the precipice, without speaking, and then looked doubtingly.—“No, no,” said he, “I'll not take the dog's life so.—Hold, there, you curse of man,” said he, drawing out his pistols, and handing one to Isaac. Isaac put out his hand to take it, without seeming to be conscious of what was to be done.—“Stand there,” said Thornton, “and make sure your aim, for the last hour of one or both of us has come.”—Isaac's hand trembled so that his pistol fell to the ground.—“Have ready, man, or you're gone,” screamed Thornton, frantic with rage.—Isaac could not move.—“Down, then,” cried Thornton, and the fire of the pistol flared over Isaac's wild eyes and convulsed open jaws. His arms tossed upward in the agony of terror and death, and he fell over into the stream. His horse, rearing with fright, plunged with his master.

Thornton looked down the precipice ; nothing was to be seen or heard but the whirl and rush of the dark tide.—“And can we go so quickly

from life to death! Why then should a man live to misery?"

He turned slowly away. The intense longing for revenge was satisfied, and he was now left feeble as a child. He mounted his horse with difficulty, and journeyed homeward under a hot sun, his brain stunned with horror. At last his mind became slowly more distinct, and with the recollection of what had past, came frightful figures, which fell away, then suddenly rose again, and spread themselves close before him. He pressed his eyeballs till they darted fire, then passed his hand quickly before his face, as if to drive away what he saw, but the terrible sight returned upon him.

The next day he reached the city about dark. As he entered it, the sudden change from the quiet of the country to the noise, the quick and various movements of the crowd, the broken light and shadow, and flare of lamps, increased the confusion of his mind, till it so wandered, that he scarcely knew where he was when he reached his own door.

He leaned forward on his horse for some time, trying to regain his self-possession. At last, looking up at the house, and observing it quite

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still and dark, the thought of his wife crossed him, for the first time. He leaped from his horse, and rushing up the steps, rang violently at the door. It was opened cautiously by one he had never seen before ; but such was the confused state of his mind that he paid no regard to the circumstance. Throwing open the door of the sitting room, he found it stripped of all its furniture. He hurried from room to room ; all was bare and deserted. Then came the dreadful truth upon him that he was beggared. The shock nearly unsettled his brain.

He ran towards the street door, scarcely knowing whither he was going, when he was arrested by a couple of men, for debt. He made no resistance, but talking incoherently to himself, suffered them to carry him peaceably to prison. He laid down upon the bed furnished him, and soon fell asleep as quietly as if in his own house, for both body and mind had lost their sensibility through violent effort and fatigue.

The sun had shot into his prison with a red and dusty ray, before he awoke ; and for a long time he could not recollect where he was, or what had past.—“In prison, and for murder, and die on a gallows !”—The turning of the key roused

him a little.—“My brain’s disordered.”—A man handed him a letter, and left the room. He gazed on it some time without minding whose hand it was.—“My God, my mother!” cried he, at last; “and am I to be your murderer too!”

Mrs. Thornton had heard from old Mr. Beckford of the attachment laid upon her son’s property immediately after his leaving the city, and had written in a state of mind that showed she could not much longer endure her sufferings. Mr. Beckford, at her earnest request, had gone to her. His nephew had left town unexpectedly; but the only suspicion was that he had fled with Mrs. Thornton, and that her husband had now returned, after an unsuccessful search. Thornton’s anguish was dreadful. His mother dangerously ill, and made so by him, and yet he not allowed to see her.—“She will die,” said he to himself, “believing that I cared not for her; and yet I dare not let her know why I cannot see her.”

In a day or two came another letter, and from Mr. Beckford, for the mother was too feeble to write. Thornton’s impatience was now almost maddening. At times he raved like a maniac, then suddenly sunk down into a state of torpor,

till the remembrance of his father, his leaving home, the misery he had brought upon himself and his friends, rushed on him. Then would suddenly appear the face of Isaac, as he saw him die, and he would spring up, and stand, as if stiff and frozen with horror.

This was not to endure long. Mr. Beckford wrote a letter to him, stating that his release was procured, and urging him to set off immediately by the conveyance furnished ; for that his mother, unfortunately, had heard of his imprisonment, and that the shock had been a violent one to her, in her weak condition.

Thornton was standing in a state of apparent insensibility, when the keeper entered with the letter. He did not notice that any one was in the room ; but when his eye fell upon it, as it was handed to him, he seized it as a caged lion would his food. He ran his fiery eyes over it, then shook it from his hand as if it had been a snake he held.—“This is not her blood,” muttered he, looking closely at one hand, then at another, as if counting the spots. “No, no, this is Isaac’s, I know it well—my old school-fellow, Isaac’s blood.” He stood a few minutes perfectly still, then pressed his hand to his forehead,

as if trying to recollect himself.—“Where have I been?—Ha! I remember now.”

“My horse, my horse,—is he ready?” he said eagerly, to the servant, who was entering the apartment.

“At the gate, Sir. But you are not ready.”

“True, true!” And he suffered the man to equip him. He looked at himself for a moment, as if not knowing for what purpose he was so dressed. Then, as the thought struck him, he darted out of the prison, and running to the gate, threw himself upon the horse, and dashing the rowels into his sides, was out of sight in a moment.

There was now but one purpose in his mind, and he clung to it with a spasmodic grasp. And the speed with which he rode, and his intense eagerness, nearly fired his brain. His eye was fixed on home—he saw nothing round him—he minded not hill, nor hollow.

The horse’s nostrils closed and dilated fast, and the sweat ran down his hoofs, when Thornton came in sight of the house. Once more he urged him on;—and then he reached the door. He tossed the reins on the neck of the panting beast, and throwing himself off, was in an instant at the

head of the stairs. The chamber door was shut. As he flung it open, he rushed towards the foot of the bed. On it lay, with a white sheet over it and with bandaged jaws, the corpse of his mother. His hands spread, his eyes glared wide, and his very hair stood on end. One shudder passed through his frame as if it would have snapt short every stretched fibre. Tearing with a grasp the hair from his head, he gave a shriek, enough to have awakened the dead, and ran, mad, from the chamber.

Old Mr. Beckford, hearing a noise over-head, stepped to the parlour door, and saw Thornton *K. Lotan?* coming down stairs. He called out. Thornton said not a word, but rushed by him, the hair sticking to his clinched fingers. As he passed, he turned his eyes on the old man—the sockets sent out nothing but flame. The old gentleman followed, trembling, to the door, and looked out, but he was gone. The noise came and went like a thunderclap, and all was still again.

He pushed eagerly on, not regarding whither he was going ; and the horse took the same course Thornton did the first time he left home.

At last Thornton struck upon the heath, and rode onward till he came where the way forked.

His recollection returned in a moment. He checked his horse suddenly, and looked over the track he had once passed. His lip quivered, and tears stood in his eyes. "Ages of misery have rolled over me since then," said he, looking forward upon the track till it was lost in the distance.—"To the left, to the left," cried he to his horse, and pressing him on, "for that, I then said, was ill omen, and it suits me now."

After Mr. Beckford had laid the unhappy mother in her grave, and had sent in all directions to gain some information concerning her son, he went to the city to make inquiries about his nephew.

The horse was washed up near the precipice, but Isaac's body was never found. It was supposed that the animal had taken fright, and had fallen with his rider into the stream.

Mrs. Thornton was soon heard of as appearing the dashing mistress of a young man in a distant city. Her extravagance and violent temper caused frequent changes in this sort of connexion, and she soon sank down into the lowest class of females of her order, and died as they die.

As no account of Thornton could be gained, it was conjectured either that he had destroyed

himself, or had wandered away a maniac. It was autumn when he disappeared; the winter had set in stormy and cold, and some supposed he might have perished.

In the early part of the day, towards the close of spring, as the widow Wentworth was taking care of a brood of chickens just hatched, a man, in a fisher's garb, drove up to her door. He was seated in a light horse-cart, old and shattered, and drawn by a small, lean horse. He inquired whether she could inform him where lived a woman of the name of Wentworth.

"It's for me you are looking, I suppose, good man. What's your will?"

"I would ask you to give me a morsel," said he, getting down from his cart, "before I tell my errand; for I've rode ever since day break, and it has been but a chilly morning."

After finishing his meal, he began as follows.—  
"There was a strange young man made his appearance in our parts last autumn; and he has been thereabouts up to this time. It's clear that he's not altogether right here," said the man, pointing to his head; "but then he would harm nobody, and kept wandering about all alone; and so we never troubled him."

“Well, what of him?” said the old woman eagerly;—for she immediately conjectured who it might be.

“I fear he’s dying,” said the man. “He was not seen all along shore for many days; and some of us went to his hut; and there he was lying, looking like one of the dead. But he was sensible enough then, and begged that we would find a widow of the name of Wentworth, (who I thought from his account must live hereabouts,) and bring her to him before he died; ‘for,’ said he, ‘she is the only one of all the living that has any love for me.’”

“And did he tell his name?”

“No,” said the man. “We asked him, but he said it was no matter, and that you would remember him to whom you told your story, and talked so holily when the sun was going down. ‘She’ll not have forgotten it,’ said he, (so mournfully that I could have cried,) ‘as I did, when I most needed it.’”

“And think you he’s living?” said the old woman.—“It matters not,” she said to herself. “I saw the tear glisten in his eye, when I told him of Sally, and I talked with him by her grave; and I’ll lay him in the ground too, when he dies.—



Which way, and how far is it to the place, good man?"

"A dozen miles, or so, due east, as I guess."

"How am I to get there, and back?" asked she.

"Even with me," he answered, "for this is the only coach in all our neck of land, and this the only steed, ragged as he looks, except the poor young man's, and he's in no better condition now."

The old woman having found a friend to take charge of her house, began her journey.

"We were all out a fishing, except the old woman," said the man, as they rode along. When we got back, she told us that a young man, a gentleman, and well dressed, had been to the hut two or three times for food, and that he always took it away with him. She would not receive his money, for he appeared not to be in his right mind. But he never failed leaving some on the table. Whether or not he knew of our return, I can't say; but we saw nothing of him, till one day, passing the old hut which we had left for a better, we spied him sitting at the door, and his horse feeding on the coarse grass near it. As soon as he discovered us, he went in, and he ever shunned us. We've seen him looking for

shellfish among the rocks, and carrying home wreck-wood for firing. How he kept himself warm through winter, I cannot tell. But for aught we could find, dried seaweed must have been his bedding. We have sometimes left food in his hut when he was out; and his horse used now and then to share the scant fare of this pony here; for I could not but pity him, though a beast, when the sleet drove sharp against him."

A heavy sea-fog was now coming in. In a few minutes the sun was hid, and the damp stood on the nag's long, shaggy coat like rain-drops. They soon heard the low growl of the sea; and turning a high point of land, they saw near them multitudes of breakers, foaming and roaring, and flinging themselves ashore, like sea-monsters chasing their prey.

They were descending slowly through heavy sand to the beach, when they heard two persons calling to each other in a sharp, high key. The voices sounded as at a great distance; but in a moment, they saw just ahead of them, and coming towards them, out of the spray and mist, a man, in a sailor's jacket, and a woman in one of the same, with a man's hat fastened under her chin by a red handkerchief. A startling, myste-

rious feeling passed over the old woman, as if those she saw were something more than human, and were given another nature to be dwellers in the sea.

"Is there life in him?" cried her guide, as they passed.—"Scant alive," called out the woman. The old widow looked back. They were passing into the mist, and were instantly lost sight of.

The fog began to break away, and the sea and sand flashed upon them with a blinding brightness. They dragged on a mile or two further, when the sky became gloomy, and the wind began to rise.

"And is all as desolate as this?" asked the old woman, looking over a thousand shapeless sand hills, which stretched away one behind another, without end, and seeming as if heaved up and washed by the sea, then left bare to sight.

"There is little that's better," answered the man.

"And have you no other growth than this yellow, reedy grass, that spears up so scantily out of these sand-hills?"

"It's not so ill a sight to us, neither, who have nothing greener," answered the man, a

little hurt. "And there's a bright red berry that looks gay enough amongst it.—But peace," said he, "for here's the dwelling of the dying man."

The building was of rough boards, some of which hung loose and creaking in the wind. It was turned almost black, except on the side towards the sea, which shone with a grayish crust; and a corner of the decayed chimney was seen just above the roof. On the ridge of one of the sand-hills by the house, stood, with his drooping head from them, the starved, sharp-boned horse, the sand whirling round him like drifting snow.—"Poor fellow," said the man, "when I first saw him, he was full of metal, and snuffed the air and looked with pricked ears and wild eye out upon the sea, as if he would bound over it."

The old woman opened the door cautiously. A gray-headed man was sitting by a sort of crib of rough boards, in which lay Thomas Thornton, his eyes closed, his cheek hollow and pale, and his mouth relaxed and open.

"Is this he," said she, talking to herself as she looked upon him, "with the burning eye and hot cheek and firm set mouth, of fiery and untamed passions? I did not look to see you come to

such an end, much as I feared for you.—May your sufferings here be an atonement for your sins.—All was not evil in you. Many have died happier than you, who had less of good in them; and have left a better name behind them than you will leave.”—A tear dropped from her eyes on his forehead. He opened his sleepily upon her. The colour came to his cheek; he lifted his hand to hers with a weak motion, and looked towards the old man.—“Leave us alone a little while,” said the widow.

He spoke. “I have been a sinful man,” he said in a faint, broken voice. He paused, and his look became wild.—“My father,—and Isaac, Isaac—he fell—and my mother—did I kill them all?” His eye appeared to fasten on an object in the distance. He then closed his lids hard, as if trying to shut out something frightful.

“What looked you at?” asked the widow.

“O, you could not see her. She is seen of none but me. I’ve looked upon the sight a thousand times. I’ve seen her shrouded body rising and falling with the waves, stretched out, as it was on her death-bed; and it bent not, and it floated nearer and nearer to me till I could look no longer.—And there, too, has she stood

for hours, on that small, white rock yonder that rises out of the sea," said he, trying eagerly to raise himself, and look out towards it. "Yes, there has she stood beckoning me, when the sun beat upon it; and I was made to look on it till its glare turned all around me black. I've tried to rush into the sea to her, though the waves ran so heavy between us; but I was held back till the sweat streamed down my body, and I fell on the sand."—He gasped for breath, and lay panting. At last he recovered a little; and opening his eyes, looked slowly about him. His lips moved. The old woman bent over him, and heard him breathe out, "God forgive my sins."

"God will forgive the repentant, however wicked they have been," said the widow. He gave a look of hope.—"I've asked it of Him day and night, when I had my mind; I've prayed to Him, stretched on the bare, cold rocks, and when I dared not look up. Will not you pray for me? Will none of the good pray for me?"

She knelt down by him, with her hands clasped, and looking upward. There was an agony of soul for a moment—she could not

speak. The tears rolled down her wrinkled cheeks, and then she prayed aloud. And from the shore went up a prayer fervent and holy as ever ascended from the house of God, And the dying man prayed with her in the spirit. She ended, and laying her hand on his forehead, said in a solemn voice, "my son, I trust there is mercy for you with God."

He looked upward and tried to clasp his hands. It was his last effort, and he sank away with a countenance as placid, as if falling into a gentle sleep.

The old widow stood for a few minutes gazing on the lifeless body. At last she said to herself, without turning away,—“he must not lie here, as an out-cast ; for the sands will drive over him, and there will be no mark where he rests. I will take him with me, and lay him by the stream near my home. And when I die, I shall be gathered with him and with my child to the grave.”

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THE

# IDLE MAN.

No. IV.

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How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle. *Cropper.*

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NEW-YORK:

WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.

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1822.



*Southern District of New York, ss.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of May, in the forty-fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America, WILEY & HALSTED, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, *to wit* :

The Idle Man.

How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle.

*Cramer.*

*In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act, entitled, "An act, supplementary to an act, entitled, An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."*

G. L. THOMPSON,

Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

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## MEN AND BOOKS.

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"Read, and fear not thine own understanding."

*Shirley's Preface to Beaumont and Fletcher.*

"Look around !

Mark how one being differs from another ;

Yet the world's book is spread before each human brother."

*Barton.*

WHATEVER comes from the press of this country, however small may be its pretensions, deserves our notice. Every thing published here must have some influence. We have not done, nor are we doing so much, that our poor things are lost, and our worst unknown. Ours is rather a solitary way, over which few minds have as yet travelled, where every thing that has been there may be seen, and where all that appears will be known and may be tried. Our failures are as obvious as our successes, and it becomes us to distinguish between them. It is idle to wait for

what may be said of us abroad. If we lack feeling, and withhold patronage ; if our judgment be a prejudice, and ill will come of excellence ; if we will hold no communion with minds which happen not to be of our school, and rigorously prescribe the height and the depth, the length and the breadth, to the current of thought and the reaches of the imagination, our speculations about what we mean to be, or to do, will avail us nothing. Our duty to ourselves is a plain one ; we must estimate fairly and value honestly, whatever may have as an end literary character, or, if you will, intellectual distinction. It is time that a good spirit were amongst us—a spirit which will welcome whatever is well done, no matter by whom ; which shall give to general opinion, or proffered criticism, the character for liberality claimed for our institutions, and secure to those who come forward practically in aid of literature, a good reception and a fair treatment. There appears to be little in the way of such a course. Public opinion, as it regards works of science or literature, does not flow in the channel of party, whether of taste or politics. There is too little of local prejudice yet current amongst us, to lead us to look for the characters of authors or their books in geographical distinctions.

Though it be a comparatively easy course, it is not without its difficulties. Little has been done here of a purely literary character. The number of literary men, who have appeared at any particular period or place, has been too small to take up much of our attention, or to make patronage a pleasure or a duty. Our writers, with very few exceptions, have not depended for their bread upon their books. One successful effort has rarely been followed by another ; and either from indolence, or the fear of losing what may have been gained, the field has been left as soon as entered. Our literature has thus been trusted to accident or caprice, and from the time of Brown down to the present moment, so wide are the chasms between its parts, that you would hardly believe they belonged to each other. It is certainly not strange that so little interest has been taken by the public in what is doing here of a literary character. But the want of a general feeling on the subject has this obvious effect ; it leaves the business of criticism or literary opinion to be managed by a few. From being thus limited, literary interest comes to be little more than individual opinion ; and private feeling, or individual prejudice, not only settles the most in-

teresting questions in our literature, but decides the fate of our authors.

To go no further with this now, I would mention a rule or two which I have laid down for myself. My way has always been to judge of writings by their own individual merits solely. I do not stop to ask whether the writer has thought or expressed himself as others have, or as I should have done, but I endeavour to trace attentively the operation of his mind in its progress of thought, and to learn with what faithfulness this has been followed out. I always try the character of a work by its correspondence, or want of correspondence with the thoughts and feelings which have already occupied my own mind, and with those which may have been suggested while reading it. In fewer words, I judge for myself; and if a man is incapable of doing this, he has no right to use the opinions of others, for he can judge no better of them, than of the subject which they concern. I know of no other rational method, by which to make up an opinion of books which relate either to the imagination, or to morals. We are not competent judges in either case, unless in some of our hours we have been conscious that we are thinking beings, and have given these lucid inter-

vals to the contemplation of things which elevate and delight our intellectual nature, and to the observance of their operations on the minds of others, as they are laid open to us in books.

This mode of judging a book by its own merits is altogether opposed to the besetting sin of popular criticism. This consists in the comparison of different books—the works of different minds—with each other, and in finding in a want of correspondence, a reason for condemnation. This mode of judging is founded wholly on the doctrine of *models*,—and in literature there can be nothing more absurd. What literary work is there, which is worth preserving, that does not differ in all that is best in it from every other work? Who are those modern writers who have been most read and most admired? They are those who, with the same language, the same intellectual natures, surrounded by the same scenes, and in the midst of the same incidents, have given you books, which act upon you by an agency so new, so unlike all you have met with before, that you almost feel as if you had received a volume from another planet, and had got with it a gift of tongues to read it. And why should it not be so? With the same material what has not been done in

nature ? Where is the model of nature ? In what region has the standard been fixed, and where is the series of nearer and remoter correspondences, which allow you for a moment to judge of the individual magnificence or beauty solely by comparison ? We indeed talk of the sublime by one name, as if it were one thing, and so of the beautiful, and the classification answers its purpose well enough. But in nature every thing is individual, and belongs to itself. Harmony here is founded in nothing so little as in mere resemblance; and the intellectual nature harmonises with the material ; and hence it is, that its greater operations, resembling each other only in their being greater, are varied by every thing that is novel, in the manner under which they are presented. You might as well demand of men to look alike, before they are admitted into good company, as to make the reception of books depend on the faithfulness with which they resemble a model, whether in the thought they contain, or in their manner.

It is the habit of our readers to judge of books by comparison. They take it for granted, in the first place, that our writers are imitators, for, say they, they use the English language. They next discover whom they resemble. Their last and

easiest task is to condemn, and this they do, because our copyists, as they consider them, do not equal their originals. I was amused, the other day, with a specimen of criticism upon *Salmagundi*—"It seems to me," said an acquaintance, as he threw down the volume he had been reading, "that it is almost as poor as *Dean Swift*." This was a kind of literary estimation, and founded on comparison, entirely new to me. This mode of judging has one evil in it worth mentioning. It tempts men to run a parallel between books essentially different in their object and character, and to find their distinguishing qualities in the different degrees of success with which it is taken for granted, that the same things have been attempted; and so it becomes the misfortune of our writers to be identified with each other by public opinion, and to see all that is distinctive in each sacrificed to a most absurd mode of criticism.

There is another rule which has much weight with me in reading and forming opinions of works of imagination or feeling. I never allow myself to be influenced by the opinions of what are termed professed scholars. I think that he who commonly passes for a scholar is a most unsuitable judge of what belongs either to the imagination



or the heart. He is called by his profession to the revolutions of literature, and the different styles which have characterized its periods, as they are termed. His are the rules by which men have written, who, in the lofty exercises of their fine minds, never dreamed of a rule. His business is with language, not as the expression of thought, but as a human invention, and you always find him occupied with the details of its artificial arrangement. It is, soberly, not very important to him what the thoughts in a book are; and its words and language are more likely to be regarded by him as pieces of the material which are to be worked up in the mechanical business of sentence-making, than as something originally proceeding from a mind—the representatives of intellectual things. This order of men are so much the creatures of rule, that their systems of criticism put you in mind of a book on Dutch horticulture, and your very soul aches to see them\* straiten thought and smooth down feeling, till they look as little like nature as a Flemish avenue, or a hanging garden. These pattern critics all have their idols. You must bow down to these and practically worship them too, let them be ever so monstrous, or all you do

will be accounted abominable. The worst of all is, these idols shift with ages, and every age has many. Hence you have as many schools of taste as generations of men; as if man's mind, like his dress, were to take a new shape in the succession of years, or from the caprices of rhetoric masters.

The truth is, the great features of the mind always remain the same, and you might as well undertake to proselytize nature, as to turn its inherent and essential qualities from their original purposes. Men always have appeared and always will appear, though the intervals may be long, and the darkness great, who will in this way connect their own age, with the best of those that are gone,—who will bring you new treasures from a vein their own hands have wrought, and make you and the succession of all ages, venerate and love them, for a bounty so pure, so vast, and so exhaustless. There is something mysterious and fearfully solemn in the intellectual nature of man, thus elevated and distinct from every thing around it. Homer, and Milton, and Shakspeare, hardly seem to have been of the species of those they lived with, or with ourselves. They remind you of those

unmeasured mountains, on the tops of which a man might not live ;—they seem to have had communion with what eye hath not seen, and there found the way to man's heart, and opened to you its profoundest depths.

There is another order of men which claims the privilege of exercising a power over authors. It is the great body of the reading part of the community. It is popularly called the world ; the public ; the people of taste, sense, and discrimination ; the discerning few, &c. &c. As a body, this order is capable of doing much good, but it unfortunately happens that it is too often split up into parties and clans, or is under the influence of scholars and reviewers.

Now, whether aimed at, or not, it is too much the tendency of such an influence to tempt men to yield the exercise of their own judgment to any body who will judge for them ; to make them superficial ; to give them partial views,—yet with an authority that commands their deference. People are apt to rest satisfied under this authority, and it is seldom that they are disposed to go to their author and try his work by their own minds. Or what is worse, they sometimes affect to be critical, too ; and with the common

sense which nature had given them, bewildered amongst rules but half learned and not half understood, they take a book in hand, as if it were a thing on which they were to pass judgment, rather than as something that was to enrich their minds and give impulse to their feelings. To make their pretensions sure, they become censorious, dogmatical and loud ; for dealers in second-hand opinions are always more positive and talkative than are those from whom they get them—just as your retailer makes more show and bustle with his wares, than does the importer of whom he buys them.

So that, with the exception of a few men of thorough taste, one is pretty sure of meeting with a juster judgment on what is in a book—a truer feeling for its delicate touches, and a quicker apprehension of what is peculiar and imaginative in it, amongst sensible, self-taught men, who live out of what we choose to call literary society, and who have been in the habit of trusting to their own understandings, than amongst those who are forever reading, to talk about books, and who meet to compare and club opinions. It is no wonder that the man of feeling grows weary, and is ready to say with

Sterne, that “the cant of hypocrisy may be the worst, but that the cant of criticism is the most tormenting.” There may indeed be hypocrisy in this as in every thing else ; and it is found where a man has buried what was native in his feelings and taste under a mawkish fastidiousness, an affected elegance, or a vain pedantry of rule—where he does not love with all his heart what he would appear to, but mistrusts its excellence, and has a misgiving of mind that what he pretends to look down upon may be above him. It is impiety against nature to complain that so few are born with a perception for the beautiful in thoughts and things. Most men could see well enough, did they not let fashion and affectation lead them blindfold.

It is in this that the principal evil lies ; and it is unfriendly to literature. A man’s own good sense, for the main purposes of literature, is to him infinitely better, than the judgment of any body else. Books are talked about as amusing, entertaining, pleasant ; and authors, in the highest departments of writing, are regarded as contributing to some momentary gratification ; coming in at those odd times when nothing else can enter. Poetry, the very highest effort the

mind can make, has been the most abused. These different terms, which, however, mean the same thing, have possibly been applied by the leaders of taste to literary works for the sake of convenience; but they have done much to impair the best influences of the best books. They are a base currency on the great exchange of letters, but writers have been taught to regard them as the true.

One of the effects of all this is to make a man propose to himself in writing, an end as fatal to originality, as it is opposed to all the highest objects in writing. It makes him look to the publick, the world, or the what-not, instead of keeping his eye steadily fixed on his own mind and his own heart. He must write to please, and the inference is inevitable, he must write like some body else who has succeeded in pleasing. You make him dependent where he should be most free. You put before him a mould, by which his opinions and feelings must all be cast,—you give a direction to that which, if it be worth any thing, ought for the time to lead you.

Books are merely the expressions of the operations of the mind. When, of the highest character, they act upon the reader who can

apprehend them, in precisely the same manner that his own intellectual operations act upon himself. You forget the agency of your eyes while reading them, and are like one in a state of perfect abstraction, when all that is beautiful or sublime in nature may be around you and put you into a happy state, without your being conscious to yourself of its existence. Books owe this to their truth. It matters not what the subject may be. They have this interest exactly in proportion to their truth, to the fidelity and freedom with which the author has given you his own mind. Hence too is the infinite variety, as well as the high delight afforded by the best works. We seem to have exchanged minds with the author, and so much are we the better for the exchange, and so far are we from regretting the temporary loss of our identity, that if an occasional consciousness intervene, it is filled up with wonder that we could ever have thought so well or enjoyed so deeply what is so exclusively intellectual. This high interest does not belong to the mass of books. It enters however into the whole of such reading as engages us enough to prevent the obtrusion of a wish to quit it.

All are capable of understanding and feeling this character of books. It asks neither for a *vade mecum* of criticism to be properly estimated, nor for the authority of another individual to make it interest us. By the independent and unprejudiced exercise of individual opinion, in the judgment they may pass on books, and the patronage they extend to writers, the great reading body of the community may come to exert a most important influence over the literature of a country. They distinguish at once the writer who has found in his own mind the materials of his work, and the judgment for using them, and they offer the strongest motive for the best intellectual exertions, in the honest reception they are willing to give to what deserves it. They are better judges of works on life and character, than any other class of readers. Their whole experience of common life has taught them how infinitely varied are the beings and things around them. Their children, if they have any, have in their diversity of character, feeling, and power, excited the strongest interest; and their purpose with them has not been to destroy this individuality, but to make it answer the greatest good. The



same mode of perception, and a like use of it, they apply to books. The peculiarities of these are found to constitute the chief of their interest, and, as in the case of real life, are at once perceived to belong rather to the individual, than to his subject.

The intellectual nature of man resembles its Creator most in the variety it can produce, whether of sublimity or beauty, or of any other quality, from the most common, or most simple elements. If we will have such products, we must neither limit, nor direct the power. We are not to judge harshly of a writer, because in the quiet of our own career the violent passions had never crossed our path, for in such a case we may be incapable of a wise judgment; and if we have had no cause for grief, nor felt it with all its causes, there is still a sacredness in the record of sorrow, with which, though we may have no feeling, it were inhuman to trifle. It is not however necessary for a writer to have experienced what he describes, nor for the reader to have felt it before, in order to understand it now. When Shakspeare was said to have dipped his pen in his own heart, it was not implied that he had

felt the anguish of Lear, or the deep melancholy of Hamlet. It was simply that he knew the character of all the passions and emotions of the heart in their fullest reality, and was open to their influences; and hence in reading his histories you feel you have to do with real life. It is the same with all writers who set before you the truth; and your want of sympathy with the imaginary being or situation is the same thing, as if you were to withhold it from the realities of common life.

Some men, it is true, are constitutionally cold, and some are made so by education. The work is generally begun by suppressing feeling or ridiculing its expression. It is perfect when the adept tries its lessons upon those whose feelings, and the expression of them have not been submitted to the same discipline. It would seem that it was the part of a cold heart to chill that of others. These people sometimes tell you they want sentiment—are not sentimental,—in other words they want the perception of the tender and lovely, of the sublime and the beautiful of a moral nature, and they want the sympathy which would enable them to feel with those who have it. Sentiment

in its genuine meaning has the same relation to the moral nature, as taste to the external. It is another expression for moral taste, and those who disclaim it have parted with one of the most valuable principles of man's intellectual nature. They have feeling of some sort, but the tendency of their system is to confine it to themselves and the few who may resemble them; and they make altogether a choice and happy fraternity, for their imagination, which has died to every thing else, is busied in fancying in themselves qualities for which each one values himself and congratulates his brother. The world to such beings is a confused and disjointed machinery, going by jerks and starts, grating in all its movements, and the only lesson it teaches them is to keep out of its way. They have no eye for the beauty of its structure and free play of its parts, but form to themselves, in its stead, a system, which, whenever in motion, we find crushing under it all sympathy with what is purest and best in the imagination and heart.

" 'Tis great pity  
That such as sit at the helm provide no better  
For the training up of the gentry. In my judgment,  
An Academy erected, with large pensions  
To such as in a table could set down  
The congrues, cringes, postures, methods, phrase,  
Proper to every nation"—

*Massinger.*

" There to learn——courtly carriage,  
To make amends for his mean parentage ;  
Where he unknowne and ruffling as he can,  
Goes current cash where for a gentleman."  
*Hall's Satires.*

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IN a country where affairs of public interest are brought so much within the scope of every individual, I have often thought it fortunate that men of a quiet and retired habit, are suffered to remain undisturbed in the indulgence of their tastes. I was startled, however, the other evening, at a club I occasionally frequent, by a proposition from my friend Ned Fillagree, which went to trouble this order of things. He, with great seriousness and apparent benevolence of intention, after bestowing a feeling panegyric upon the multitude of benevolent institutions

which exist amongst us, proposed a plan which he said would be the means of giving to a very worthy class of our fellow citizens an opportunity of mixing in the gay world. This class comprised those whose pecuniary means would not admit of an interchange of expensive entertainments with the wealthy, but whose talents for conversation and whose entertaining qualities would make them an acceptable addition to any polite company. Ned conceived that all such were kept out of society by that species of false pride, which would not permit them to receive favors when there was no return to be made; and his scheme he thought must completely remove the difficulty. He would have an association formed and duly incorporated under the style of the, "Fashionable Resuscitating Society"—to be composed of the wealthy givers of great entertainments,—and a fund to be raised in the following manner :—On occasion of any member of the society, whose means were undoubted and abundant, giving a ball or other entertainment,—such member to pay down a specified bonus to go towards the general purse. But where the ability to contribute could not be truly estimated by the style maintained, (cases of

not unfrequent occurrence and generally to be traced to the instrumentality of some sagacious mother of half a dozen marriageable daughters,) Ned would modify the exaction in such manner as merely to affect the quantity of music, so that such persons, when they gave a ball, by having one or two fiddles the less, might meet the contingency and still enjoy the honours of membership:—The funds of the society to be at the disposal of a discriminating committee, whose office it should be to ferret out social worth in obscurity, and to supply the means and see them appropriated in the true spirit of the institution.

Ned prides himself not a little on his good footing in the beau monde, and as he cannot separate the ideas of bustle and enjoyment, I never could convince him that my retired mode of life was the result of choice. I observed Ned, as he prefaced his proposal, to eye me with a peculiar beneficence of expression—something like that of a courtier bestowing a boon; and I now marked his entire complacency of visage as he added, “that he believed his plan, if carried into operation, would go farther to prevent suicides, than all the penal laws ever enacted.”

The pause which generally follows the introduction of any thing strange, was in this instance of short duration. No sooner had Ned made an end of speaking, than up started a trig figure, which I had never before seen, making no scruple to proclaim his hostility to Ned's suggestion, on the ground of there being no existing grievance of the nature contemplated in it. He contended that no one possessing the requisite qualities for high life need fear neglect under the present order of things. On the contrary, the press of invitations which assailed men of wit and fashion, he declared to be a growing inconvenience, and the one most requiring remedy. He portrayed the shifts and devices to which men of this stamp are often obliged to have recourse in keeping their fashionable friends in good humour, while resisting their importunities; and in the course of his harangue gave us pretty distinctly to understand, that he himself was amongst the sufferers from this species of polite persecution. He vowed it a great bore; and holding his hat in one hand, adjusting his gloves, and screwing his face into an expression of pensive resignation, instanced the necessity he was this evening under of making his bow at

no less than five different parties, thereby being compelled to forego the happiness of a longer stay amongst us.

During this harangue, I remarked a gentleman sitting by himself at one side of the fire-place ; and I thought I discovered something of sly significancy in the glances with which he occasionally surveyed the dissenting gentleman. I also imagined once or twice, as he knocked the ashes from his cigar, that I could perceive in his countenance a suppressed inclination to laughter. As soon as the object of his scrutiny was out of the room, I edged my chair near to where he was sitting, and as there was great good nature indicated in his appearance, ventured to ask if he could inform me who the gentleman might be that had just left us. He answered me with a leer, " that this person was well known to him, but he believed it would puzzle the best of them to tell how he had made his way into the club." " He is, however," continued the gentleman, " considered a prodigy of ingenuity in this way—a perfect master, Sir, of polite enginery ;—no fortress of reserve being too much for Bob Brazen. His element is a fashionable atmosphere. He will foretell you a



ball or cotillion party with as much precision as it is said a person of sensitive nerves will discern the approach of an earthquake. I remember last winter when my aunt Testy gave her great ball, Bob's calling regularly the five preceding days. During this time none of the family could move abroad without stumbling upon Bob. And on all encounters he never failed referring to the approaching festivities. The fourth day had passed, and aunt was just felicitating herself on having parried all his hints for an invitation, when a knock was heard at the door. It was Bob. This was the last day of grace with him; and his deportment bespoke sad foreboding watchfulness. Every thing was bustle and confusion in the house. Indeed the hurry of household affairs had produced such a disturbance in aunt's stock of complaisance, that seeing Bob passing the threshold at this unfortunate juncture, all efforts to suppress her ire were in vain. On entering the room, he could not but be sensible of the awkwardness of his situation. Assuming, however, a careless, playful air, he thought to make a diversion in his favour by an apt quotation; and placing himself in attitude, began—*'This busy hum of prepara-*

tion.' 'Busy hum, indeed,' exclaimed aunt. 'I must say, Mr. Brazen, we are too busy every way to receive visits this morning'—and turning her back, desired 'that he would more fittingly time any future visit with which he might honour the family.' Neither aunt's action nor tone of voice could be cited as specimens of the conciliatory in eloquence. But Bob's was a desperate case; he was too politic to be over fastidious, and there was no alternative. Affecting, therefore, to understand the last words which aunt let drop, as an invitation to the ball; he observed, as he took his leave, that luckily he should be disengaged and would do himself the pleasure. Accordingly we had Bob Brazen at our ball, in all his wonted sprightliness and unconcern. In truth you will scarcely be at a gay assemblage in town without seeing Bob; and with those who know less of him than I do, the wonder is how he contrives to make his way into so much good company.

Happening one day to be dining with an elderly gentleman, a member of our general assembly from a remote part of the State, I was surprised by my worthy friend's jumping suddenly from his chair and running to the window. 'Pray,' said my friend,

as he took his seat again at table, 'what is the name of the youth who just passed?' 'That,' replied I, 'is Bob Brazen.' 'I thought it was he; and yet he is so changed I could hardly credit it. I am glad, however, to behold him looking so fresh and active. The young man was formerly a townsman of mine, and has caused some stir amongst us. You must know, about three years ago, upon occasion of our academy exhibition ball, Bob, as being the likeliest looking of our youngers, was appointed to conduct the festivities in quality of master of ceremonies. Bob trigged himself out in his best and smartest, and really made quite a dashing appearance; but unluckily, just as he had got the dancers arranged for the second country-dance, his father, a rough, severe old farmer who had a mortal antipathy to merri-making and extravagance, being on his way home from town, happened to drive his team up to the tavern where the company had assembled. Hearing the fiddle agoing, and learning that Bob was of the party above stairs, he did not wait to reason the matter, but seizing his cart-whip, rushed in the first impulse of his wrath, to the scene of action. Bob was in the act of giving a stamp for the music to strike up *'rural*

*felicity,*' when open flew the door, and the grim, raw-boned front of his enraged Dad presented itself. Not the ghost of Hamlet to the young prince could have been more appalling—a general panic and consternation seized upon the whole assembly—Bob stood breathless like one in a trance. The old farmer advanced three paces into the room, leaving space for a person to pass by him to the door ; and as he cleared the lash of his whip with one hand, uttered the word '*Bob*' in a tone something between the bark of a mastiff and the discharge of a volley of musketry. The sound of the old man's voice broke the spell which held poor Bob to his place. Awakened to a full sense of his deplorable condition, and knowing how fruitless it would be to demur, he moved with all the alacrity the disturbed state of his nerves would allow, in obedience to a significant signal from the whip-staff, towards the door.—'I'll teach you to junket, you dog,' bellowed the old rustic, as Bob drew near the point of exit—at the same time making such unequivocal demonstrations with his cart-whip, as precluded all possibility of mistake as to his method of instruction. Since that most unlucky evening, Bob has not been seen in our village ; and notwithstanding the

testimony of the stage-coach driver, who avers he saw him with a small bundle under his arm several miles from the village on the great road, it was currently reported, and is now the settled belief, that Bob drowned himself in a fit of despair the very night of his disaster. 'I am now happy,' observed my friend the representative, as he concluded his story, 'in having it in my power to clear up all doubts concerning the fate of Bob Brazen; and I am confident in doing so, I shall gladden the heart of many a damsel of our neighbourhood.'

I have troubled you, Sir, with this relation of my country friend's, because I think it has a direct and intimate connexion with Bob's distinguishing traits. It is a generally received opinion that incidents, in themselves trifling, may give a bias to the mind of deep and lasting character. And why is it not natural to suppose that Bob, considering himself in the light of a martyr to the cause of fashion, should become its most zealous votary. I have no doubt that in the recollection of the bitter mortification which attended his entrée into the polite world, he experiences a secret satisfaction in the reflection that he is now beyond the reach

of paternal tyranny. And can it be wondered at, that on one, having a white-oak cart-whip familiarized to his mind as a proper instrument of exclusion, means less potent should fail of their effect?"

Here the communicative gentleman was interrupted by a loud sound of uproar which burst upon us from the other end of the room. Instantly springing up to ascertain the cause of alarm, we beheld a scene of thorough confusion and dismay. The large table, around which we had but a few minutes before left our friends quietly seated, overturned—candles broken—chairs scattered helter-skelter—eager gesticulations on all sides, and the discordant din of twenty voices raised to their highest pitch. In the midst was Ned Fillagree, mounted upon a chair, vociferating, to order, and claiming to be heard; while at the further end of the room appeared a small pattern of a man, writhing under the firm grasp of some six or seven of the stoutest in the company, foaming with rage and uttering the direst imprecations of vengeance. It was some time before order was sufficiently restored to enable me to learn the particulars of the affray.

It seemed there was a young Creole from the West Indies, introduced to the club this evening by one of its most important members. This young gentleman friend Ned most unluckily marked out as a fit subject for his countenance and patronage. 'Tis true the young man's complexion was a little equivocal; but no one except Ned would have attributed to him the honor of affinity with that gallant race, by the conquest of whom Scipio earned his distinguishing appellation. But so it was; and no sooner had the young man seated himself at table, than Ned began to inveigh against the absurdity of a custom which deprives us of the advantages of social intercourse with a very numerous class of our species. Every pause in the conversation was improved by Ned to enforce his favorite theme. The young West Indian, not comprehending the kindness of Ned's motive, remained silent and confounded. This Ned interpreting as the effect of diffidence and self-distrust, which it would be praiseworthy in him to dispel; by way of encouragement, calling on the young man across the table to join him in a glass of wine and proposing as a toast, a health to Mr. Wilberforce, declared that he looked

forward with pleasure to the time when all invidious distinctions of colour should be done away! The West Indian's blood now boiled;—feeling himself most outrageously insulted, he made a desperate pass at Ned, overturned the table in his progress, and occasioned the scene of tumult we witnessed.

The harmony of the meeting being thus completely destroyed, it was judged most expedient to adjourn. As I walked home with Ned, it was amusing to observe how perfectly unconscious he appeared of having been guilty of the least rudeness or impropriety; laying the whole blame of the transaction to the choleric temper of the West Indian. This deadness of perception prevents his ever applying to a right use the many lessons he receives from disastrous experience. Ned is universally allowed to be the best natured fellow living; and were his benevolence of heart tempered with that nice principle of delicate discernment which we understand by the word *tact*, and which seems intuitive in some persons, his would certainly be a most estimable character. He aims at being the active agent and dispenser of all the good that comes to his friends. It appears to be the passion of his mind to cater



for every body ; and in rendering you a service, it is ten to one you are annoyed with his officiousness. With the best possible intentions, he is continually doing things in themselves extremely troublesome and offensive.

Against a system of effrontery, got up in self complacency and used as a means of self-exaltation, as in the instance of Bob Brazen, a thorough, decided course of conduct could not fail of its effect, and one would not scruple to adopt it. But Ned Fillagree, with all his annoying improprieties, has so much that is sterling, that you are unwilling to deal harshly with him, or forswear his company. From the many good traits in his character, we are led to hope that the faulty may be amended, or at least lessened ; and involuntarily setting about the task of expostulation, we soon find ourselves stopped by his impenetrable obtuseness. On the whole, I fear Ned's case an incurable one, and that he must be classed with that school of restless, sturdy philanthropists which aims at compelling all men to be happy, without regard to fitness of means or variety of taste.

Though it may seem to run counter to good morals, that what is bad should be less offensive

than what is weak, yet we every now and then meet with characters that convince us that it is so. There are men who think of little else beside self-gratification, and who never scruple the means,—who care for us no farther than they may turn us to account,—yet having with all this a certain dexterity which makes them sure of their aim, they become almost agreeable to us against our wills, and oblige us to pass over their faults in spite of our sense of right. Even where they push for their object with more shallow artifice and with impatient rudeness, they rather amuse than disgust; make us good natured and forgiving, and incline us more to laugh than to be angry. While he who is every man's well wisher, and whose life and enjoyment it is to do good, but without having intellect enough to order or well time his purposes, teases us with kind offices, grows ungracious as he grows in zeal, and unjustly shares amongst men, the fate of a grey headed beau amongst the girls, becoming at once our torment and our sport. We are sensible that all this is not right—remonstrate with each other about it, and end with confessing our fault, and wishing it could be mended.

That we should pass over what is wrong because joined with dexterity and hardihood, is an unmixed evil ; but that bustling, active weakness, however well meant, should move us somewhat to disgust and contempt, has, like most ills, a good in it. For were it otherwise with us, the short sighted and feeble minded might become leaders in what was praiseworthy, and the cause of virtue be lost from its poor support.

## MUSINGS.

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—“a steadfast seat

Shall then be yours among the happy few  
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,  
Sons of the morning,—

—He sat—and talked

With winged messengers ; who daily brought  
To his small Island in the ethereal deep  
Tidings of joy and love.

—then, my Spirit was entranced

With joy exalted to beatitude ;

The measure of my soul was filled with bliss,

And holiest love ; as earth, sea, air, with light,

With pomp, with glory, with magnificence.”

*Wordsworth's Excursion.*

HAVE we looked upon the earth so long, only to reckon how many men and beasts it can maintain, and to see to what account its timber can be turned, and to what uses its rocks and waters may be put ? Do we, with Baillie Jarvie, think it a pity that so much good soil should lie waste under a useless lake, and set against the cost of draining the in-comings of the crops ? Have we lived so many years in the world and been familiar with its affairs, only to part off men into professions and trades, and to tell the due proportions required to stock

each? Must we for ever travel the straight forward, turnpike road of business, and not be left to take the way that winds round the meadows, and leads us sociably by the doors of retired farms? Must all the hills be levelled, and hollows filled up, that we may go like draught-horses the dull and even road of labour, the easier and with more speed? May we not sit awhile to cool and rest ourselves in the shade of some shut-in valley, with its talking rills, and fresh and silent water plants,—or pass over the free and lit hill-tops, catching views of the broad, open country alive with the universal growth of things, and guarded with its band of mountains resting in the distance, like patriarchs of the earth? Must all we do and all we think about have reference to the useful, while that alone is considered useful which is tangible, present gain? Is it for food and raiment and shelter alone that we came into the world? Do we talk of our *souls*, and live as if we, and all that surrounded us, were made up of nothing else but dull matter? Are the relations of life for our convenience merely, or has the fulfilling of their duties none but promised and distant rewards?

Man has another and higher nature even here; and the spirit within him finds an answering spirit in every thing that grows, and affectionate relations not only with his fellow man, but with the commonest things that lie scattered about the earth.

To the man of fine feeling, and deep and delicate and creative thought, there is nothing in nature which appears only as so much substance and form, nor any connexions in life which do not reach beyond their immediate and obvious purposes. Our attachments to each other are not felt by him merely as habits of the mind given it by the customs of life; nor does he hold them only as the goods of this world, and the loss of them as turning him forth an outcast from the social state; but they are a part of his joyous being, and to have them torn from him, is taking from his very nature.

Life, indeed, with him, in all its connexions and concerns, has an ideal and spiritual character, which, while it loses nothing of the definiteness of reality, is forever suggesting thoughts, taking new relations and peopling and giving action to the imagination. All that the eye falls upon and all that touches the heart, run off into

airy distance, and the regions into which the sight stretches, are alive and bright and beautiful with countless shapings and fair hues of the gladdened fancy. From kind acts and gentle words and fond looks there spring hosts many and glorious as Milton's angels; and heavenly deeds are done, and unearthly voices heard, and forms and faces, graceful and lovely as Uriel's, are seen in the noonday sun. What would only have given pleasure for the time to another, or at most, be now and then called up in his memory, in the man of feeling and imagination, lays by its particular, and short-lived and irregular nature, and puts on the garments of spiritual beings, and takes the everlasting nature of the soul. The ordinary acts which spring from the good will of social life, take up their dwelling within him and mingle with his sentiment, forming a little society in his mind, going on in harmony with its generous enterprises, its friendly labours, and tasteful pursuits. They undergo a change—becoming a portion of him—making a part of his secret joy and melancholy, and wandering at large among his far off thoughts. All that his mind falls in with it sweeps along in its deep and swift and continu-

ous flow, and bears them on with the multitude that fill its shoreless and living sea.

So universal is this operation in such a man, and so instantly does it act upon whatever he is concerned about, that a double process is forever going on within him, and he lives as it were a two-fold life. Is he, for instance, talking with you about a North-west passage, he is looking far off at the ice islands with their turreted castles and fairy towns, or the penguin at the southern pole, pecking the rotting seaweed on which she has lighted,—or he is listening to her distant and lonely cry within the cold and barren tracts of ice ;—yet all the while he reasons as ingeniously and wisely as you. His attachments do not grow about a changeless and tiring object ; but be it filial reverence, Abraham is seen sitting at the door of his tent, and the earth is one green pasture for flocks and herds ;—or be it love, she who is dear to him is seen in a thousand imaginary changes of situation, and new incidents are continually happening, delighting his mind with all the distinctness and sincerity of truth. So that while he is in the midst of men, and doing his part in the affairs of the world, his spirit has called up a fairy vision, and



he is walking in a lovely dream. It is round about him in his sorrows for a consolation ; and out of the gloom of his afflictions he looks forth upon an horizon touched with a gentle morning twilight and growing brighter as he gazes. Through pain and poverty and the world's neglect, when men look cold upon him, and his friends are gone, he has where to rest a tired mind that others know not of, and healings for a wounded heart which others can never feel.

And who is of so hard a nature as to deny him these ? If there are assuagings for his spirit which are never ministered to other men, it has tortures and griefs and a fearful melancholy which need them more. He brought into the world passions deep and strong—senses tremulous and thrilling at every touch—feelings delicate and shy, yet affectionate and warm, and an ardent and romantic mind. The refinements and virtues of our nature he has dwelt upon till they have almost become beauties sensible to the mortal eye, and to worship them he has thought could not be idolatry. And what does he find in the world ? Perhaps in all the multitude, he meets a mind or two which answers to his own ; but through the crowd where he looks for the

free play of noble passions, he finds men eager after gain or vulgar distinctions, hardening the heart with avarice, or making it proud and reckless with ambition. Does he speak with an honest indignation against oppression and trick? He is met by loose doubts and shallow speculations, or teasing questions as to right and wrong. Are the weak to be defended, or strong opposed? One man has his place yet to reach, and another his to maintain, and why should they put all at stake? Are others at work in a good cause? They are so little scrupulous about means, so bustling and ostentatious and full of self, so wrapt about in solemn vanity, that he is ready to turn from them and their cause in contempt and disgust. There is so little of nature and sincerity—of ardour and sentiment of character—such a dulness of perception—such a want of that enthusiasm for all that is great and lovely and true (which, while it makes us forgetful of ourselves, brings with it our highest enjoyments) such an offensive show and talk of factitious sensibility—that the current of his feelings is checked—he turns away depressed and disappointed—becomes reserved and shut up in himself, and he, whose mind is all emotion, and

who loves with a depth of feeling that few souls have ever sounded, is pointed at, as he stands aloof from men, as a creature cold and motionless.

But if manner too often goes for character—hard learnt rules for native taste—fastidiousness for refinement—ostentation for dignity—cunning for wisdom—timidity for prudence—and nervous affections for tenderness of heart—if the order of nature be so much reversed, and semblance so often takes precedence of truth, yet it is not so in all things, nor wholly so in any. The cruel and ambitious have touches of pity and remorse, and good affections are mingled with our frailties. Amidst the press of selfish aims, generous ardour is seen lighting up, and in the tumultuous and heedless bustle of the world, we meet with considerate thought and quiet and deep affections. Patient endurance of sufferings, bold resistance of power, forgiveness of injuries, hard tried and faithful friendship, and self-sacrificing love, are seen in beautiful relief over the flat uniformity of life, or stand out in steady and bright grandeur in the midst of the dark deeds of men. And then again, the vices of our nature are sometimes

revealed with a violence of passion and a terrible intellectual energy which fasten on the imagination of a creative and high mind, while they call out opposing virtues to pass before it in visions of glory. For "there is a soul of goodness in things evil," and the crimes of men have brought forth deeds of heroism and sustaining faith, that have made our rapt fancies but gatherings from the world in which we live.

And there are beautiful souls too in the world to hold kindred with a man of a feeling and refined mind, and there are delicate and warm and simple affections that now and then meet him on his way, and enter silently into his heart like peculiar blessings. Here and there on the road go with him for a time some who call to mind the images of his soul,—a voice or a look is a remembrancer of past visions, and breaks out upon him like openings through the clouds. The distant beings of his imagination seem walking by his side, and the changing and unsubstantial creatures of the brain put on body and life. In such moments his fancies are turned to realities, and over the real the lights of his mind shift and play—his imagination

shines out warm upon it—it changes, and takes the freshness of fairy life.

When such an one turns away from men, and is left alone in silent communion with nature and his own thoughts, and there are no bonds on the movements of the feelings, and nothing on which he would shut his eyes, but God's own hand has made all before him as it is, he feels his spirit opening upon a new existence—becoming as broad as the sun and air—as various as the earth over which it spreads itself, and touched with that love which God has imaged in all he has formed. His senses take a quicker life—his whole frame becomes one refined and exquisite emotion, and the etherealized body is made as it were a spirit in bliss. His soul grows stronger and more active within him as he sees life intense and working throughout nature ; and that which is passing away links itself with the eternal, when he finds new life beginning even with decay, and hastening to put forth in some other form of beauty, and become a sharer in some new delight. His spirit is ever awake with happy sensations, and cheerful and innocent and easy thoughts. Soul and body are blending into one—the senses and thoughts

mix in one delight—he sees a universe of order and beauty and joy and life, of which he becomes a part, and he finds himself carried along in the eternal going on of nature. Sudden and short lived passions of men take no hold upon him, for he has sat in holy thought by the roar and hurry of the stream which has rushed on from the beginning of things; and he is quiet in the tumult of the multitude, for he has watched the tracery of leaves playing safely over the foam.

The innocent face of nature gives him an open and fair mind—pain and death seem passing away, for all about him is cheerful and in its spring. His virtues are not taught him as lessons, but are shed upon him and enter into him like the light and warmth of the sun. Amidst all the variety of the earth, he sees a fitness which frees him from the formalities of rule and lets him abroad to find a pleasure in all things, and order becomes a simple feeling of the soul.

Religion to such an one has thoughts and visions and sensations, tinged as it were with a holier and brighter light than falls on other men. The love and reverence of the Creator make their abode in his imagination, and he gathers

about them the earth and air and ideal worlds. His heart is made glad with the perfectness in the works of God, when he considers that even of the multitude of things that are growing up and decaying, and of those which have come and gone, on which the eye of man has never rested, each was as fair and complete as if made to live forever for our instruction and delight.

Freedom and order and beauty and grandeur are in accordance in his mind, and give largeness and height to his thoughts—he moves amongst the bright clouds, he wanders away into the measureless depths of the stars, and is touched by the fire with which God has lighted them—all that is made partakes of the eternal, and religion becomes a perpetual pleasure.

## LETTER FROM TOWN. N<sup>o</sup>. 2.

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"Not moved a whit,  
Constant to lightness still!"

"You're for mirth  
Or I mistake you much."  
*The Old Law,*

E'en such a man, so faint, so spiritless,  
So dull, so dead in look, so wo-begone."  
*Henry IV.*

IN the first letter which I wrote you from town, I mentioned our old friend's taking me with him to his club. As we entered late, and a good part of the members could be seen but dimly through the smoke, I shall put off a general description till I have a view of them in a clear atmosphere. Besides, while it is fresh in my mind I wish to give you the latter part of a brisk dialogue, which was going on as we entered, between a snug built, well dressed, fresh looking man of about five and forty, and another of nearly the same age, I am told, but



apparently ten years older—of a slender, spare frame, clad in a mixed gray suit with black buttons—of a thin visage—with an impatient hurry at times in his speech, followed by a whining drawl. He nestled about in his seat, with a fidgeting motion, and there was a nervous twitching of the eyelids, and a restlessness in the eye, though he was all the while looking at one object, very much as folks do when repeating from memory. The first gentleman, who seemed to have most of the talk to himself, was going on thus, as we drew near them—

“There is no telling how large a pack of troubles a man may have upon his shoulders at the end of life, who keeps it always open like an alms-basket, and has no hole at bottom to let out a little of what he takes in. He need not ape a lame leg or a broken back. If he keeps his wallet stuffed with odd scraps of bad meat and mouldy bread, when he can get better, for the sake of groaning over his hard fare, he will go doubled and limping to his grave, in good earnest.”

“A pleasant fellow, you, Tom, with a nose-gay in your button-hole, and snuff between thumb and finger, who never found it too cold

without doors, nor too hot within. You go as gay as an ostrich, and with not a whit more thought neither."

"I've done my part, Abraham, and 'tis my wife's to look at things at home and to keep the children out of the fire, or cure 'em when they get in. Besides, I never saw any good come of too much care of the brats,—it only makes 'em helpless. And if all's at sixes and sevens at home, and my mate's voice and face grows sharp and angry, I come and take heart at the sound and sight of your clear voice and gay countenance, over a bottle of the best."

Abraham did not much like this taunt at his complainings, and his cheek began to kindle and grow redder and redder, like a coal fire, the louder and longer Tom laughed. Tom seemed to care little for this, so it put a stop to the drone-pipe which Abraham was said to play upon whenever he came to the club to have a merry night on't.

"No surer cure for our troubles, Abraham," says he, "than to get into a devil of a passion; and you've not a better friend in the world than I, who am always helping you into one. Why, you would have gone all night like an ill greased

wheel, spoke crawling after spoke to the melancholy creaking, hadn't I vexed you. Now, we shall see you in a fine whirl presently, striking fire out of every stone you hit against. Don't you remember how sad you were a half score years ago, because the gout wouldn't carry off your uncle ; and when it did that business for you, and took you softly by the toe, only to tell you of it, how wo-begone you looked, just as if your mourning suit was to be handed over to your man John to 'appear respectably in at his master's funeral? Yet you got here to-night without halting ; and if you don't make your way home as quick as the rest of us, it will not be the gout that will hinder you."

Abraham had three charges to answer to—his complaining disposition—his eagerness for his uncle's death, and an over fondness for good wine. Now, whether it was his anger that made him take up the last word, as is generally the way with a man in a passion, or that the two first charges were not to be denied, Abraham chose to clear himself of the last, and to have his revenge on Tom by railing against a weakness which he himself was kept from by at least as great failings. He knew the cost of his

liquor, and that too much wine helped to rid him of his uncle, and Abraham was said to be both a miser and a coward.

“Have you no shame in you, Tom, that you will be talking of drinking? Don’t you remember the snake track you made back the very last night you were here? And by the going of your clapper and the shine of your eye, you bid fair now to get home again the same way. When have you seen me make such a beast of myself as to hold up by my neighbour’s knocker instead of my own? I set my children a better example, teach them to strive against temptation and keep a watch upon any besetting sin. I tell them that life is a state of trial and affliction—that if they have riches and blessings to-day, they may be all gone to-morrow—that though they are now in health, sickness is nigh at hand, and that death may overtake them at noonday—that they must learn temperance in all things, and never forget they are in the midst of evils. But what good will it do to tell you this? You never will have forethought; and though there is little else but pains and misfortunes in life, you go on as reckless of all, as if harm could never come to you.”

“There you are at your saws again! I tell you what, father Abraham, he’s a fool who is always busy making troubles for himself, when there is no danger but what he will have enough gratis. I’ve weathered more storms than will ever beat on your head, though I haven’t sat like an old crow foreboding them while the sun shines. To take you in your own way, I have not forgotten what I read when a boy, ‘sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.’ My creed is, ‘to enjoy is to obey.’ And I can say more than can be said for most of you, I make my faith the rule of my conduct, and take care to act up to it. And if I sometimes love my friends so much as to forget myself and be a little too merry with them, it stirs my blood, and I’m all the better for it the next day. I lose no time by it, for it is all done up at night; and if I’m not quite right, my children will have a warning in me at home, and not be obliged to pull their neighbours’ characters to pieces to mend their own with. Besides, it is as well to have a failing or two to keep the world in good humour with one, for nothing puts people out more than a man’s being too good for them. And what would come of all my virtues, if they only made men enemies to me and, so, to themselves?

You talk about my children. Why man, don't they owe their lives to me, and what's more, don't I teach them how to enjoy life. Would you have me pray over them all day, till they were as long visaged as saints at conventicle? Stout hearted, full blooded lads,—and you would have them crawling along as meek and pale as a Philadelphia patient after a semi-weekly slop bleeding! Then again—there's my wife—but one purse between us and no questions asked. Rides or walks as she pleases—and not a word about shoe leather.” Here Abraham coloured. “I'm all attention;—see her at parties abroad, dine with her at home—when-ever there's company. She orders what suits her, and is undisputed mistress of the household. I'm always pleased to see her in spirits; and if affairs go wrong, and she's in ill humour, I take care not to put any restraint upon her by being in the way. I was here an hour earlier than usual to-night because the servant let fall the tea-tray and broke half a dozen tea-cups,—and as I've missed my tea, thank you Mr. B. to fill my glass.”

Twirling a light silver headed cane in his right hand and reaching out his glass with his

left, I began filling it. At this critical moment the long, dry, wrinkled, sallow visage of Abraham, looking like the inside of an old cast-off snuff bladder, caught my eye. Turned partly round, and leaning forward,—contrary to his custom, for he seldom looked at the person he was talking with,—his eyes were fixed steadfastly upon the rattle-headed Tom, with that mixed expression of pity and imploring with which one gazes upon a man that is going to be hanged;—if Tom was just then to have been swung off, it could not have been more mournful. I was so intent upon the face of Abraham, that I forgot what I was about, till Tom, feeling the wine running over his hand, and moving suddenly, brought me to myself. Before I could mutter an apology he saw the direction of my eye, and turning towards Abraham burst out into a loud laugh. It was not to be withstood. Tom had broken the enchantment; and in spite of good breeding and good feeling, there was an instant roar of laughter through the room. This was too much even for Abraham. He sprang upon his feet, uttering something between a mutter and a curse, (he never dared swear outright) and twitching down his hat, which had

grown nap-worn and round edged through use, and at the same time seizing his long, slender oak cane with something like a threatening motion, he darted out of the room between a run and a stamp.

As soon as we could speak, and had wiped our eyes—"I told him a little while ago," said Tom, "that I was the best friend he had in the world, and I shall always prove so. By putting him into such a rage, he's off without paying his share of the reckoning. There need be no making up between us, for he will no sooner remember this, than he will forgive me from the bottom of his heart. Poor fellow, I pity him. Nobody ever set out with fairer prospects, or has had things more comfortable about him; and yet he is the most forlorn being living. Didn't you hear him prose just now about his anxiety for his children?—while all his aim is to see that they shall be no happier than himself; for he takes another's enjoyment as a reproach upon his own self-made misery. And as to his care about their worldly estate, it is all because he feels their possessions will be in a sort his even after death. For my part, when I die, I'm content to give up all my claims to those I leave behind



me. And while I live, I mean to make them and myself as merry as we can know how to be."

With a rap upon his box, and shaking the snuff from between his fingers, Tom ended his moral lecture ; and with a well satisfied nod of the head, took himself off to wind up the night with a hand at whist.

The rest of the company soon went out, one after another, without any noise, like sparks upon burnt paper, leaving my old friend and me to finish the bottle. Without thinking of it, we at the same moment drew up to within a companionable distance of each other ; and while carefully pouring a little, first into my glass and then into his, alternately, that we might share alike, till the bottle was drained ; he began, in that same composed manner and low toned voice which was familiar to me some years ago, by observing, that though Tom's last remarks might seem harsh and in the extreme to me, yet he feared there was too much truth in them.

"I knew Abraham," said he, "when a child. He was then a spare lad, with a wrinkled brow, and weak, anxious voice. As he was feeble, his mother nursed him up with caudles and tippet—bid him never wet his feet, and taught

him that it was a sin to dirty his clothes. Thinking him not fit to push his way in the world, and knowing that wealth stands one well in hand who has little force of character or intellect, Abraham was instructed, like other careful boys, to get himself a box to drop his money in, and never to spend his change foolishly on holydays. His love for every thing great and generous was destroyed by his attention's being forever taken up with little things. Seeing another so much concerned about him, made him overrate his own importance ; and his continued anxiety about his money and health soon centred all his thoughts and affections upon himself. And with all his pains-taking, finding others happier than himself, it was not long before he became an ill-natured, discontented man.

“ The other never had the headach in his life ; and fair weather or foul, it mattered little with him. Constitutionally happy, all that he could, he turned to enjoyment, and what he could not, he let alone. So much of his happiness came from his health, that he never cared for the more abstract pleasures of the mind ; and with that triumphant, joyous feeling which flows from full blood, he looked down upon feebler constitutions,

and at last felt a contempt for those who suffered under the afflictions of life. From the same cause, he apparently likes those who are fond of merriment, as well as he; and really supposes himself to be a kind-hearted, friendly fellow, when in truth he cares nothing about others only just so far as they help to make up a part of his pleasures. Tom is as selfish as Abraham, but not so annoying, because good natured. You may think I should allow some praise to this quality of character. There is no need of it. Men will always give it its full due; and as for its opposite, if it does not make its own punishment, the world will lay it on without sparing."

Here, our wine was gone, and the last candle was burning in the socket. We took our hats, and laying our reckoning on the table, we walked quietly home to my friend's house.

According to the little progress I have as yet made in my account of what I meet with in the city, you will be in danger of having me a correspondent for life.

Yours,

B.

## WINTER SCENES.

---

The time has been that these wild solitudes—  
Yet beautiful as wild—were trod by me  
Oftener than now ; and when the ills of life  
Had chafed my spirit—when the unsteady pulse  
Beat with strange flutterings—I would wander forth,  
And seek the woods. The sunshine on my path  
Was to me as a friend. The swelling hills,  
The quiet dells, retiring far between,  
With gentle invitation to explore  
Their windings, were a calm society  
That talked with me and soothed me. Then the chant  
Of birds, and chime of brooks, and soft caress  
Of the fresh sylvan air made me forget  
The thoughts that broke my peace, and I began  
To gather simples by the fountain's brink,  
And lose myself in day-dreams. While I stood  
In Nature's loneliness, I was with one  
With whom I early grew familiar, one  
Who never had a frown for me, whose voice  
Never rebuked me for the hours I stole  
From cares I loved not, but of which the world  
Deems highest, to converse with her. When shrieked  
The bleak November winds, and smote the woods,  
And the brown fields were herbless, and the shades,  
That met above the merry rivulet,  
Were spoiled—I sought, I loved them still,—they seemed  
Like old companions in adversity.  
Still there was beauty in my walks ; the brook,

Bordered with sparkling frost-work, was as gay  
 As with its fringe of summer flowers. Afar  
 The village with its spires, the path of streams,  
 And dim receding valleys, hid before  
 By interposing trees, lay visible  
 Through the bare grove, and my familiar haunts  
 Seemed new to me. Nor was I slow to come  
 Among them, when the clouds from their still skirts  
 Had shaken down on earth the feathery snow,  
 And all was white. The pure keen air abroad,  
 Albeit it breathed no scent of herb, nor heard  
 Love-call of bird nor merry hum of bee,  
 Was not the air of death. Bright mosses crept  
 Over the spotted trunks, and the close buds  
 That lay along the boughs, instinct with life,  
 Patient, and waiting the soft breath of Spring,  
 Feared not the piercing spirit of the North.  
 The snow-bird twittered on the beechen bough;  
 And 'neath the hemlock, whose thick branches bent  
 Beneath its bright cold burden, and kept dry  
 A circle on the earth of withered leaves,  
 The partridge found a shelter. Through the snow  
 The rabbit sprang away. The lighter track  
 Of fox, and the rackoon's broad path were there,  
 Crossing each other. From his hollow tree  
 The squirrel was abroad, gathering the nuts  
 Just fallen, that asked the winter cold and sway  
 Of winter blast to shake them from their hold.

But Winter has yet brighter scenes,—he boasts  
 Splendours beyond what gorgeous Summer knows,  
 Or Autumn with his many fruits and woods  
 All flushed with many hues. Come, when the rains

Have glazed the snow and clothed the trees with ice,  
 When the slant sun of February pours  
 Into the bowers a flood of light. Approach !  
 The encrusted surface shall upbear thy steps,  
 And the broad arching portals of the grove  
 Welcome thy entering. Look, the massy trunks  
 Are cased in the pure crystal, branch and twig  
 Shine in the lucid covering, each light rod,  
 Nodding and tinkling in the stirring breeze,  
 Is studded with its trembling water-drops,  
 Still streaming as they move with coloured light.  
 But round the parent stem the long low boughs  
 Bend in a glittering ring, and arbours hide  
 The glassy floor. Oh ! you might deem the spot  
 The spacious cavern of some virgin mine,  
 Deep in the womb of earth, where the gems grow,  
 And diamonds put forth radiant rods, and bud  
 With amethyst and topaz, and the place  
 Lit up, most royally, with the pure beam  
 That dwells in them. Or haply the vast hall  
 Of fairy palace, that outlasts the night,  
 And fades not in the glory of the sun ;  
 Where crystal columns send forth slender shafts  
 And crossing arches, and fantastic aisles  
 Wind from the sight in brightness, and are lost  
 Among the crowded pillars. Raise thine eye,—  
 Thou seest no cavern roof, no palace vault ;  
 There the blue sky and the white drifting cloud  
 Look in. Again the wildered fancy dreams  
 Of spouting fountains, frozen as they rose,  
 And fixed with all their branching jets in air,  
 And all their sluices sealed. All, all is light,

Light without shade. But all shall pass away  
 With the next sun. From numberless vast trunks,  
 Loosened, the crashing ice shall make a sound  
 Like the far roar of rivers, and the eve  
 Shall close o'er the brown woods as it was wont.

And it is pleasant when the noisy streams  
 Are just set free, and milder suns melt off  
 The plashy snow, save only the firm drift  
 In the deep glen or the close shade of pines,—  
 'Tis pleasant to behold the wreaths of smoke  
 Roll up among the maples of the hill,  
 Where the shrill call of youthful voices wakes  
 The shriller echo, as the clear pure lymph,  
 That from the wounded trees, in twinkling drops,  
 Falls in the dazzling brightness of the morn,  
 Is gathered in with brimming pails ; and oft,  
 Wielded by sturdy hands, the stroke of axe  
 Makes the woods ring. Along the quiet air  
 Come and float calmly off the light soft clouds,  
 Such as you see in summer, and the winds  
 Scarce stir the branches. Lodged in sunny cleft,  
 Where the cold breezes come not, blooms alone  
 The little wind-flower, whose just-opened eye  
 Is blue as the spring heaven it gazes at—  
 Startling the loiterer in the naked groves  
 With unexpected beauty, for the time  
 Of blossoms and green leaves is yet afar.  
 And ere it comes, the encountering winds shall oft  
 Muster their wrath again, and rapid clouds  
 Shade heaven, and bounding on the frozen earth,  
 Shall fall their volleyed stores, rounded like hail  
 And white like snow, and the loud North again  
 Shall buffet the vexed forests in his rage.

THE  
  
IDLE MAN.



No. I.—Vol. II.

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How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle. *Cowper.*

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NEW-YORK:  
WILEY & HALSTED, No. 3, WALL-STREET.  
1822.



*Southern District of New-York, ss.*

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of May, in the forty-fifth year of the independence of the United States of America, WILEY & HALSTED, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, *to wit* :

The Idle Man.

How various his employments, whom the world  
Calls idle.

*Comper.*

In conformity to the act of the congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act, entitled, "An act, supplementary to an act, entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

G. L. TOMPSON,  
Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.

The following story is a digression to the main story.

It is a story of a man's life.

## PAUL FELTON.

— From his intellect,  
And from the stillness of abstracted thought  
He asked repose.  
And fears, and fancies, thick upon me came;  
Dim sadness, and blind thoughts I knew not nor could name.

Who thinks, and feels  
And recognises ever and anon  
The breeze of Nature stirring in his soul,  
Why need such man go desperately astray,  
And nurse "the dreadful appetite of death?"  
*Wordsworth.*

Do not torment me!  
Pray, and beware the foul fiend.  
*Shakespeare.*

PAUL FELTON was the son of a well educated country gentleman of moderate fortune, who, having lost his wife early in life, took upon himself the education of his son and daughter, from an unwillingness to be deprived of their society, and as a relief in his melancholy hours.

The retired life which the father led prevented the son's having many acquaintances, and checked those open, communicative feelings which make schoolboys so pleasing. The serious and reserved manners which the father

had fallen into, rather from his loss than any thing native in his disposition, made an early impression on the son; and from childhood Paul was retired, silent and thoughtful. His character was of a strong and steady nature, left to its free play amongst his early habits, with a violence increased by his solitary and secret action.

The people of the neighbourhood were rude and uncouth, for the most part, and of a rough and bold bearing, which, from the union of ignorance and independence, in a distant manner appeared to them like an assertion of superiority; and on all occasions which offered, they were careful to show their dislike of it. This not only increased his reserve, but gave to his mind a habit of viewing on strangers as in some sort enemies; and when passing by one who was not a familiar, he felt as if they were something like mutual hostility towards them. With all this he had good nature, and when looking out from his solitude, he had the easy and mingling cheerfulness of some of the strong attachments which here and there bound others fast together, he saw how beautiful was that which was companionable and kind in the

heart of man, and his eye rested on it, and his soul longed after it.

So evil, however, is the nature of men, that almost the love of what is excellent may lead to sin if we do not take heed to the way in which we seek it; and we may see, and understand, and wish for it, till we come to envy it in another :— We may gaze upon a character that is fair and elevated and happy, till we feel its very goodness stirring in us dislike. Paul had no settled ill will towards any one; though, perhaps, there was mingled with his repining somewhat of envy at the happiness and ease of mind in others.

As he advanced in life his passions waxed stronger, and he craved an object about which they might live and grow. His retired habits, however, had left him without any of that careless confidence which helps along in so wonderful a manner men of the world; and with a perfect consciousness of his own powers, he was distrustful of his ability to make them known, and of the estimate which others would put upon them. This same uneasy distrust ran into all his feelings; and with a character to love earnestly and tenderly, the fear that his personal appearance and somewhat awkward manners

deprived him of the power of showing what his heart was susceptible of, made him almost miserable with the thought that such feelings were ever given to him. "When I am tired of solitude," he would say, "and my heart aches with the void I feel, shall all that I am conscious of within me as beautiful and true, be made scoff of by another, because I have not the fair form and manner of other men, and my tongue cannot so well tell what is within me? Shall all that is sincere in me be questioned or looked on with indifference?" So far had even his good affections become a torment to him, that all was at war and in opposition in his character. At one time he was busy in scornful speculation and doubt upon his passions,—and at another, he would urge them on; and give them rein that he might feel all the self torture they would bring. No one thing was left to its natural play—as making a part of his daily life—but existed in excess, or not at all. This change and opposition broke up that settled state in which the sense of truth puts us, and left him restless and disturbed, till at last his mind seemed given for little else, but to speculate upon his feelings,—part or unite them, quell them, or inflame them

nigh to madness. He who so far questions his own nature will question all things, and will bring the most pain and misery on those who are dearest to him because he is for ever asking for an assurance of returned affections, and seeking it in the power he feels himself to have over the object he loves. He inflicts his tortures and still doubts; and goes on to the end, working his own misery, and seeing the object of which he is most fond, perishing like himself.

Paul was nearly alone in the world. His father was for the most part lost in his own thoughts. His sister, though lively and talkative, had neither deep feeling, nor much strength of intellect. So much action and sound to little purpose wore on Paul's spirit, and though he was not without affection for her, a sneer would sometimes escape him in his impatience. He would shut himself up in his chamber, or wander off where no human being was to be met with, without so much as a dog for a companion.

He had now lived many years a self-tormentor, and without communion with any one to relieve his mind, when Esther Waring, the daughter of his father's friend, came on a visit to Paul's sister. Her disposition was cheerful and social,

and she had a thoughtful, active mind, which drew and fixed the attention of those she talked with. Her feelings were quick and kind, and the tenor of her thinking and remarks showed that they were deep. Her black hair fell round her dark, quiet eye, which seemed to rest on what the mind was showing it; and when she spoke, a light shone through it from the very recesses of the soul, as the stars shoot up from the depths of the waters, brightening what they shine through. Her form was beautifully moulded, and her movements gave it that pliability and delicacy which so touch and interest men of grave or melancholy natures.

Paul would often ramble among the hills, dwelling upon his own thoughts, and seeking for sympathy in nature; but she did not always answer him; and then it was that he stood like a withered thing amidst her fresh and living beauty. Sometimes he would sit alone on the top of one of the chains of these neighbouring hills, and look out on the country beneath him, as if imploring to be taken to a share of the joy which it seemed sensible to as it lay in the sunshine. He would call in the spirit to the birds that past over him, and to the stream that wound away till

lost in the common brightness of the day, to stay and comfort him. They heard him not, but left him to cares, and the waste of time, and his own thoughts.

It was after one of these melancholy days that he returned home about dusk, and not having heard of the arrival of a stranger, entered the parlour with a gloomy countenance, his eyes cast down, his full black eyebrows bent together, and his lips moving as if he were lost in talk with himself. Without observing that there was any one in the room, he walked directly to the window, and stood looking out on the evening sky. His powerful face and the characteristic movement of his body attracted the attention of Esther; and her eyes fixed on him unconsciously as he stood partly turned from her. He was below the common height, with a person square, muscular, and somewhat heavy; but he had the air and bearing of one of a deep, resolute and thoughtful mind—as being one of those men, whom, if a woman loves at all, she loves with the devotion of a martyr.

“Paul,” said his father.—“Sir,” answered Paul without turning his head.—“Here is my old friend’s daughter, Miss Waring.”—Little



used to society, and watchful lest others should mark his defects, his manner, when in company, was at all times somewhat embarrassed. He turned, and saw the fair face of Esther. It was slightly flusbed, and the light which filled her eye and played over her countenance broke upon the gloomy face of Paul, and touched the sluggish spirit within him with a sensation of warmth and life. He made such apology for his inattention as his sudden introduction would allow of. His manner was constrained, and a little awkward. It was, however, the constraint of a certain sensitiveness which gives more interest and delight than that sort of acquired, conventional ease and grace so common in the world.

A country tea-table is a social affair ; and Paul lost for once a little of his taciturnity. The presence of an agreeable stranger is a great restorer of the spirits to those who are little in the world ; and the mixture of playful and serious in Esther's conversation, and the freshness which we feel coming from a new mind, kept Paul till a late hour in the parlour. His next day's walk was a little shortened, and the regular tread of his step as he paced his chamber was

not heard so long, and was often broken. It was evident that the settled gloom of the mind was from day to day breaking up, and that new thoughts and objects were coming in ; and that which had bound the soul like ice was melting and loosening and going off. He continued his walks more from habit than to relieve the intenseness of his thoughts, and his path lay less over the heath and sand than usual, and more amongst the grass, and trees, and flowers ; his sense of the beautiful was becoming more wakeful and softening the sternness of his nature.

The change went on so gradually and secretly, that it was a long time before he was conscious any was taking place. After breakfast he loitered in the parlour, and his evening passed quietly away in mild conversation with Esther. The beautiful blending of the thoughtful and gay in her manner and remarks played on him like sun and shade beneath a tree ; and tranquillizing and gentle emotions were stealing into him unawares.

Nor was it he alone whose heart was touched. Paul was not a man whom a woman could be long with and remain indifferent to. The strength of passion and intellect so distinctly marked in his features, in the movements of the

face, and in every gesture—the deep, but rich, mellow tone of his voice, with a certain mysterious seriousness over the whole, excited a restless curiosity to get more into his character;—and a woman, who is at the trouble of prying into the constitution of a man's heart and mind, is in great danger of falling in love with him for her pains. Esther did not make this reflection when she began; and so taken up was she in the pursuit, that she never once thought what it might end in, nor of turning back.

Paul was differently educated from the run of men; his father disliked the modern system, and so Paul's mind was no encyclopedia, nor book of general reference. He read not a great deal, but with great care; and his reading lay back amongst original thinkers, and those who were almost supernaturally versed in the mysteries of the heart of man. Their clear and direct manner of uttering their thoughts had given a distinctness to all his opinions, and a plain way of expressing them; and all he had to say savoured of reflection and individuality. He was a man precisely calculated to interest a woman of feeling and good sense, who had grown tired of the elegant and indefinite.

He never thought of the material world as formed on purpose to be put into a crucible ; nor did he analyse it and talk upon it, as if he knew quite as much about it as He who made it. To him it was a grand and beautiful mystery—in his better moments, a holy one. It was power, and intellect, and love, made visible, calling out all the sympathies of his being, and causing him to feel the living Presence throughout the whole. Material became intellectual beauty with him ; he was as a part of the great universe, and all he looked or thought on was in some way connected with his own mind and heart. The conversation of such a man (begin where it might) always tending homeward to the bosom, was not likely to pass from a woman like Esther without leaving some thoughts which would be dear to her, to mingle with her own, and raising emotions which she would love to cherish.

Two minds of a musing cast will have some valued feelings and sentiments, which will soon make an intergrowth and become bound together. Where this happens in reserved minds, it goes on so secretly, and spreads so widely before it is found out, that when at last

one thought or passion is touched by some little circumstance, or word, or look, a sympathizing feeling runs through the whole; and they who had not before known or intimated that they loved, find themselves in full and familiar union, with one heart and one being.

Esther's visit had now continued so long, that she was sensible it was proper for her to return home unless urged to remain; but it so happened that she never thought of going, without at the same time thinking of Paul, and with that came a procrastinating, lingering spirit. There was always something happening which was reason enough for her putting off the mention of the affair. She argued the matter, and said to herself, Paul did not cause the delay; but her heart beat quicker, and she felt that she was trying to deceive herself.—“I will know whether he cares for me,” said she. “There is something strangely inscrutable in him. I must, I will see into that sealed up heart.”—The hour came; but, in spite of her efforts, her voice was tremulous when she spoke of leaving the family. Paul was sitting opposite her at the table. His heart sunk at the words. He looked up, and his eyes met hers. The colour came to his cheek :

She blushed, and her eyes fell beneath his. Mr. Felton and his daughter protested against her going.—“I hope,” said Paul at last.—She looked up at him once more. He coloured deeper than before, and was silent. It stung him to the quick that any one should see the struggle of his feelings ; and he left the room.

As he traversed his chamber, his step grew quicker and quicker, and instead of gaining composure, his mind was more and more agitated. He became too impatient to bear it any longer, and was hurrying out to find relief in the open air, when he met Esther in the entry. Ashamed to let Paul see her emotion, she was passing him with her face turned from him.—“The show of concern,” said Paul, without calling her by name—Esther stopped—“the show of concern for us in some may seem impertinent, and offend us more than their indifference or dislike. If I was too obtrusive just now, let me hope for your forgiveness.”

“Mr. Felton officious ! And can he think me so frivolous or vain a girl as not to feel any token of regard from him a cause for self-esteem.”

“I did not humble myself to extort praise, Miss Waring ; it is enough if I have not offended.”

"Neither did I mean it as such," replied Esther. "I was not so weak as to think your self-approval needed my good opinion to support it."

"Do not misunderstand me," replied Paul. "I spoke in true humility, and not in pride. Not to have offended you was all I dared look for."

"Has it ever seemed to you that any of your many notices were other than grateful to me? If so, my manner but poorly expresses what I feel. Go where I may, Mr. Felton, I shall remember how much my mind owes you—how much the thoughts you have given it have done for my heart. And I hope it is not in my disposition to be thankless for any good I may receive."

"Had I a claim," answered Paul, "it is not your gratitude I'd ask for. The heart that longs for sympathy and finds it not, what else can touch it?—Forgive me, I know not what I say.  
 • —To be remembered in kindness by you, Esther,  
 • shall be a drop to comfort this thirsty soul."

"And can a soul large as yours, and filled with all things to delight another's mind, seem desolate to you?"

"Is it enough, think you, Esther, to be gazed upon? Or can the imagination satisfy the cravings here, at the heart?"

"The heart that does crave fellowship strongly, may surely find it, Paul, if we do not perversely, and for our self-torture, shut it up."

"Yes, but it is not every passer-by that I would go with. O, she must be one so excellent, so much above me! And yet I would not take her, did she come to me in mercy only. It drives me mad to think on't. For me there is no fellow.—Alone, alone, I must go alone through the wide and populous earth," he cried, leaving her suddenly.

As he went along, his eye past swiftly from one object to another, seeking something to rest upon, which might fix his hurrying and disordered thoughts. So fully had the notion possessed him that he was doomed to live without sympathy in the world, that the power was denied him to reveal to another what was in his heart, that his person, his manner, and all which made the outward man, barred him from any return of love, that the interest he discovered Esther to show in him, while it came like an unlooked for joy, brought with it doubt, humil-



iation and pain. He thought what he must seem to be to another, and then distrusted the plainness and steadiness of her nature.—“There is not enough within them,” said he, “for their minds to dwell upon ; there must be something outward and near to entertain their thoughts ; and their fickleness makes them careless how poor it is, so it will do for the time. She will go back to the world, and, amongst showy and accomplished men, will laugh secretly at herself, that such an one as I am ever quickened one beat of her heart.—Yet it may not be so ; souls may hold communion hidden and mysterious as their nature. Can looks and movements and voice like hers, all blending in harmony, speak any thing but truth ? Would that her heart lay open like a book to me, that I might read it and be satisfied !”

He had walked on through brake and over crumbling moss, and was climbing up the shadowy side of a steep hill, when, reaching its brow, the whole sweep of the western sky opened upon him in full splendor, and he seemed in an instant standing on the verge of a new world, a world of light and glory. As he looked forward, all that lay between him and it sunk

away, he felt himself expanding through the air, and becoming, as it were, one of the sons of light. But the spirit that lifted him up for a moment, passed like a bright cloud from him, a weight was on his soul heavier than the earth with all its hills, and reality breathed on him like the air of death. As he stood on the bare hill alone, and saw all beneath him making a fair society, the trees in brotherhood :—" Must I only," he cried, " of all the works of God, be an outcast?"—He looked again upon the sky ; but the quiet clouds seemed to him to be telling of joy and peace to each other. His lip quivered as he leaned with folded arms, gazing on the setting sun. " The whole earth mourns thy going, thou gladdener of all things ; thy light is poured out over it ; thou touchest the trees and the grass and the rocks, and they each answer thee ; thou fillest the air, and sounds are heard in it as if coming forth from thy very light ; and all mingle in thee as in one common spirit of cheerfulness and love."—The sun was now gone. He set himself down upon a stone, till the visionary twilight and shadows were lost in the common darkness. There was the same vagueness of purpose in his mind as when he left home, yet

there was less tumult of the passions, and gentler feelings had entered him. As he turned to go homeward, the few stars that were coming out in the east cheered his spirit, hope gushed out in his heart like returning life, the affections were all in motion, and, for a while, the sense that he was in fellowship with his kind thrilled through him with rapture.

Esther was at the door when Paul returned.—

“What, alone?” asked he.

“Yes, you have all deserted me.”

“And can you feel deserted, Esther, who have the company of happy thoughts?”

“All thoughts that we cannot share, in time turn to sadness.”

“They do indeed, or to something worse than sadness—to discontent—almost to hate sometimes.”

“That is a fearful sin, in the solitude of our souls to grow in evil.”

“It makes us mad almost,” said he, his eyes shooting a wild light on her. His look and voice made her tremble.—“Patl, Paul,” said she vehemently, “‘what ails ye? Can a heart like yours find no sympathy in all this world? Is there no one being to share in all its goodness with you, and give it ease?”

“And with whom shall it find rest,” he asked, looking earnestly at her.—Her eagerness had carried her too far; she blushed deeply, and stood silent before him.—The struggle with himself was a severe one; he had never laid open one deep feeling, and how could he make known that of love? At last he said, after a pause, “though of form and manners unwinning, and reserved, and seemingly cold and hard, I have at times been foolish enough to think that there was one being who could read something of my soul, and love me for what she found there. Tell me, Esther, was I mistaken, did I presume too far?”

“And do you ask me so doubtingly,” said she, much moved, but looking up frankly at him, “to reprove me for speaking as I did in the warmth of my feelings? You cannot think,” she added, somewhat cast down, “that it was an artifice in me to ~~listen~~ listen you to this. I did not consider that it was a freedom which ill suited me, and it came from an earnest heart, Paul.”

“My words were not those of reproof. O, Esther, it was said in the lowliness of a soul, which, though too often restless and proud, is at times humble as a worm. It is a trial of my

faith in you to believe that you could ever love me with all your heart; the world could hardly have persuaded me once, that a creature like you, made almost to be worshipped of men, could ever look in fondness on one like me.”—He paused for a moment; then his manner changed suddenly. “But, but,” he cried, hurried and vehemently, “so much as I doubt my powers to touch another’s heart, so much the more, so much the more must I have assurance of her love.”

“Why so wild, Paul? What pledge can I give you, that I would not?”

“Ay, ay, but the pledge must not only be a sure one,” said he, his manner growing still more vehement,—“it must be of a love which shall make me all in all. Can you,” he cried, seizing her hand and wringing it hard, “have me in all your thoughts—make your whole soul mine?”—She shook, and turned pale. She struggled to pass it off lightly; but a tear was in her eye, as she said, with a forced smile—“Why, Paul, you are beside yourself!” Any body might think I was making myself over to the Evil One, and not to the man that loves me.”

*Exhausting!*  
 "Forgive me, forgive me, Esther," he murmured in a choaked voice, throwing his arms round her neck and resting his hot brow on her shoulder,—“I—I feel myself sometimes too poor a thing for mortal regard; and then, and then I could crawl into the earth. O, take me to you, and cherish me, and tell me that I am not wholly worthless—that you will love me.”

“Paul, Paul,” said she, scarce articulately, “this is madness. You have brooded all alone over your melancholy thoughts, till they have bewildered you. If you care for me, shall I not make you happy? Look up, and let a cheerful spirit enter you.”—He lifted his head slowly from her shoulder, and stood gazing on her beautiful, tremulous countenance.—“O, you are an angel come in mercy to me. My spirit will never suffer so more.”

“This is too eager, Paul,” said she, kindly. “Let your soul have rest, and try to be of a calmer mind.”—And he was quiet. The heave and tossing of the feelings settled away, and he stood with thoughts as gentle as the moonlight which poured over them, as it came up in the east;—for what spirit will not a woman’s kindness calm?

At last Esther's father came to take her home. Paul was urged to join them; but a certain delicacy prevented his going for the first time to the house in company with the woman to whom he had been but a little while engaged; and so, with an embarrassed and half uttered apology, he said he should soon follow them.

He had time for only a word or two at her leaving him; and yet he looked and spoke as if it would take ages to pour out what was in his soul. All the good affections in our nature seemed at work there—it was love, and pity, and parental care, and the heart-sickness of parting. As he put his arm gently round her, and looked in her face, there was in his manner more of the father, who is about parting with an only daughter for the first time, than of the lover. His voice was low, and thrilling, and admonitory.—“You are going from me, Esther, for the first time since we met. A single and near object moves our affections strangely. In a little while you will be amongst those with whom you grew up; and old sympathies of thought and feeling may return to you. Look carefully into your heart, Esther, and think it your best faith to me, to abide by what that tells you.”

“And can you regard and love me, Paul,” she said, turning her eyes upward to his with a prayerful look, “and judge me of so light and changeable a heart?”

“No, Esther, but the very intenseness of love calls up misgivings; and better I were left out on the bleak heath yonder, than be gathered to your bosom, to be thrown away again.”

They parted; and though Esther loved him with a devoted spirit, she breathed ~~more~~ more freely when out of his presence. He was dearer to her for his melancholy; and his kind and fond manner, when his abstraction of mind was gone, touched her heart. Yet there was something fearful and ominous to her in his gloom; and though she knew it had been caused by long solitude, and a mistaken estimate of the relation in which he might stand to others, still it was mysteriously foreboding to her, and there was an indistinct impression on the mind that some dreadful event, connected with it, awaited her.

He followed with his eyes the daintily moving steeds and gay chariot, till a turn in the road shut them out from his sight.—“They belong to what we call the elegancies of life,” said he to himself. “There is much going under that



term which serves to break up the thoughtfulness of the mind, and what is native and sincere in the heart.”—He turned away, not only melancholy, but dissatisfied and doubting. And now that he was alone again, and without the kind persuasions of Esther, his old depression and gloom were returning, and with them all the torture that doubting minds undergo in love. Sometimes he saw her before him with the distinctness almost of real presence ; her voice and countenance beautifully touched with her fondness for him ; and then again he remembered her cheerful, social spirit, and he was driven from her thoughts by those who were strangers to him. And a thousand times a day he would ask himself, “is she thinking of me now, or is she busy amidst the millions of things which waste our time and draw to them our wishes and hopes, yet have nothing abiding in them like the nature of our souls ?”

These conjectures and sad reflections were now to give way to feelings immediate, active and intense ; for Paul set off from home and soon reached Mr. Waring’s.

Unless a man has met, after a long or distant separation, the woman who loves him with all her

heart, he never saw the soul shine out in the countenance in all its glow and beauty. So thought Paul when they met. And as Esther looked on him, his face, too, was changed like the edge of a cloud by the shining of the sun upon it: And she felt that no joy is like her joy who reads such silent tokens of love returned, heart answering to heart, and thanks for the deep gladness she has given.

The house of Esther's father, whither Paul had come, was situated but a few miles from the city, in a pleasant village, made up chiefly of people of wealth and fashion. Though Mr. Waring's fortune was not as large as many of his neighbours', as he had no child but Esther he was able to gratify his fondness for company and gay life, and had made them agreeable to her from early habit. She loved society the better, also, because she made it pleasant, and not for the reason that those do who are as dull company to others as to themselves.

The consequence of all this was, that Paul and she had fewer hours together, than when at his father's. He was shy of being near her in company, and to talk with the woman to whom he was known to be engaged, before strangers,

would have been martyrdom to him. He found that her countenance brightened and spirits rose high in society. Her gay laugh and cheerful voice was like the hissing of an adder in his ear. He was pained and made uneasy, because he saw her taken up with that in which he felt himself unfitted to hold a part. She was giving delight and receiving it in return, and he could not share in it. He would stand aside and watch her, till he fancied that her look and tone of voice were the same with which she looked on and talked with him.

His mind was in a peculiar degree single. Whatever passion or thought was in him, it filled him entirely; and now that it was love, all in the world that held not connexion with that was as nothing to him; he neither heard, nor saw, nor felt any thing that concerned not his love for Esther. The alacrity with which she entered into whatever was going on, was to him a want of steadiness of mind and depth of feeling. He understood nothing of those to whom the passion of love gives a gay spirit—a feeling of kindness and fellowship towards all the world—from whom, as it grows fuller and more intense, it sends forth something of its

bright influences over all things:—In him it was a self-absorbing and lonely fire, flaring only through the recesses of his own soul, and shining alone upon his own solitary thoughts.

“And has God given them another constitution of mind also?” said he to himself one night, as he left the room, too restless to stay any longer. “Have they no fastnesses nor places of rest to come home to? Day and night are they on the wing and never tire. The bird that passed over me just now, and called to me out of the darkness, though he make himself companion of the stars the night long, will go to his nest by morning.—I would not be a thing to lay my heart open to the common eye. Its beatings warm me the more, to think that I can be in the midst of men, and they not count its pulses. Rather than lie out forever sunning in the day, I would be covered up in my grave.”—Paul could not accuse Esther to himself, without a feeling of compunction. This did not drive away his doubts, but made him turn some of the impatience he felt, upon her. Yet in the midst of it, the truth of her character would appear to him in all its fair simplicity, and his adoring spirit would look up to her as something set apart and sacred.

Her spirits were in full flow when Paul left the room; for it gave animation and cheerfulness to her in all she did, when she thought he saw her. The conversation began to flag; she turned to look for him, but he was gone. She remembered that a feeling like depression had been gradually gaining on her, and a superstitious thought crossed her, that she had been mysteriously conscious of missing something, she knew not what, though she did not before perceive he had gone. She grew silent, the company withdrew, the family retired to rest, and she was left alone.

It was midnight, and Paul had not returned. There was no sound in the house. She raised the window and looked out. It was a black, misty night, and there was that intense stillness abroad, which, at such a time, is felt by us as a supernatural presence, and makes us think of death. She scarcely breathed as she listened for his footstep, and the beatings of her heart struck upon her ear like a distant bell. At last she heard him as he came round the house, and the blood bounded through her frame.—“Paul!” she cried, and her silver voice rang in the still air. Paul entered,—“Where have you been, you

runaway," said she, springing lightly towards him,—“to give me the heartach for two long hours,—and all in the chilly night fog, too. See,” said she, running her fingers playfully through his coarse, glossy, black hair, on which the dampness stood in drops—“these pearls shall all be mine, and make me a happy girl again.”

“They will not be the first that have eased a woman’s heart, Esther. Come, come, these are no brown curls to ring the white fingers of a fair hand.”

“I thought to cheer you,” said she, drawing back, “I am sorry it offends you.”

“Did I speak harshly, Esther? If I did, it was far from what I feel.”

“Not harshly, but mournfully, and as if I had given you cause; and to think so is harder to bear, than what comes from an over hasty temper.”

“I am glad to hear you say so, for that is one of the many tokens whereby we find out love.”

“And are you in search of mine still? I had thought it had been yours long ago.”

“And I think so too, Esther; but then it can rest only on our belief, and upon that there will always be hanging some ugly shred of doubt.”

"O! I had thought it was a faith," said she, "not to speak profanely—a faith that surpasseth knowledge, that it was in us as our consciousness, our very life. Is it folly in me to think so?"

"No, Esther, it is your virtue. Bad as I am, I have moments of much blessedness—and this, this is one of them;—it is on me now," he cried in a broken laugh. She started from him as from a deranged man.—"Be not alarmed," said he, seizing her arm, and looking on her eagerly, but with a melancholy smile, "I am not mad, not quite mad, though joy shoots through me sometimes like fire."

"I wish it might burn in you gently and constantly, Paul, for then I should see you a happy man; and I would die to night and give over all my love for you—if love must die with us—could I but leave you happy." She covered her face, and sobbed as if all comfort had forsaken her.

"O, Esther, I am not worthy this; I'm so poor a thing I ought not to make you unhappy even.—That was an evil time in which you saw me first. When I was alone, I went about the earth as a doomed thing; and now that I am connected with my kind, the curse that

was on me singly, seems to be stretching out over all in communion with me. When I see you happy, my heart aches for you, to think how heedless you are of the hour that is waiting you."

"And what hour have I to fear, Paul, but the hour of death which is to part us?"

"I cannot tell; only I have lived impressed from the time I was a boy, that it was writ I should be miserable. And when I see you happy, you look to me like a star trailing your glory across my gloom only to fall and go out in it. Better, I fear, that I should have lived on in darkness, than that your light should ever have shone on me. O, I talk! No more of this now. The morning will overtake us. You look pale and heart-sunken. Let me not make your hour of rest miserable, Esther. Think this, as I hope it is, but the boding of midnight. To-morrow I'll be as cheerful as the lightest of them. Sweet sleep comfort you. And now, my love, good night."—Esther looked at him, melancholy, yet something cheered, but she could not speak as they parted.

For several days, Paul's affectionate manner was not broken by any sudden starts or gloomy reserve; and if after a time these returned upon



him, it was seldomer ; and his disposition seemed softened and quieted. The day was coming that Esther was to be his wife ; and as it drew near, he felt more surely how deeply rooted she was in his heart.

There is a tenderness and delicacy about a serious man, at times, the beauty of which affects us even more than when we see them in a woman. This is partly from the contrast. They are in agreement with a woman's person and general character, and are habitual to her. And it may be that when the man is under their influences, he has a more exquisite sense of them—may we say a finer touch for them?

Though Paul always showed the greatest fondness for Esther, except at moments when hunted by some fearful passion or thought, there was now such a kind regard, such a delicate propriety of the affections in his manner towards her, that she almost thought some new and higher sense of his love had been given her—it moved her to tears. Paul was happy that it did ; it made her the nearer to him. He knew that the tender affections have more or less of melancholy in them, and that all his own were tinged by it.—“ Let me fasten on these bracelets,” said

he, taking out a pair he had just purchased, "for there is a charm in their circles to bind you to me."

"Nay, nay, Paul, no manacles, though to bind me to you even," she said, unclasping one of them and whirling it round her finger.—"Don't look so serious about it," she added, holding her wrist up to him. "There, clasp it again, and you shall be the first to take it off, though thou wouldst have me spell-bound, thou wizard man. I wish it had been something else, though."

"And what would you have had it, Esther?"

"This," said she, passing her hand playfully over his face.

"What, a face like mine, and 'in little,' and set round with gold and diamonds! And where would you have worn it? Why, it would have made your heart beat with fear to have such a looking thing so near it. And to have made love to it, Esther," he said, half smiling, "that's past all faith."

"Then there is no truth in my love, Paul."

"Yes, but there is," he answered rapidly, "it's all truth. And yet," he added half to himself, and as if pondering upon it, "'tis very strange."

"What is strange?"

"That Esther should ever look on me, and after, love me. And yet you will vow it to-morrow, will you not?"

"If you question it so, it may be better for us both that I should not. For when I have done it, should Paul doubt, he had better be in his grave than live."

"Nor should I deserve to see the light, nor feel this blessed sun upon me. I was moody, Esther. Do not lay to heart what I say at such times. My joy was too much for me, and made me play with misery. Did'st never in grief have a wild and horrid mirth ~~fork~~ <sup>fork</sup> by you like lightning? I have, that my eyes have been blenched at it. I shall be used to this joy soon, and then my spirit will be as quiet before you as that cloud which rests above us in the light. O, you shall be my sun and all else that is good and cheering to me; and when I hold you to me so, to-morrow, I'll not call you Esther, but my wife."

The next day they were married, and Paul took Esther to their new home, not quite a mile from the village. The building was plain and well proportioned; set down in the middle of a level grass plat, which was broken only by the

gravel way winding up to the door, and a clump of young trees a little on one side. The whole was open to the sun ; and about it was an air of perfect simplicity and quiet. All along the even road to the village lay a beautiful prospect ; and there was a row of elms and sycamores, stretching the whole length of the route. So that, though they had but one near neighbour, Mr. Ridgley, they had quite as much company as if in the midst of the village.

Their house terminated these pleasant views ; for a little back of it ran a ridge of steep rocks ; and beyond that the country was desolate, stretching out into wide sand tracts, broken by patches of scant, short, yellowish grass, and half round the whole, swept a forest of low, ragged pines. The place was difficult of access, and appeared to be a land accursed ; neither the foot-print of man nor beast was to be seen there. It was one of those good for nothing tracts of country, which are sure to lead their proprietors into law suits. A farmer in the neighbourhood had put a couple of men on it to cut down the wood ; and this business he carried on for many years, till falling into a dispute with a neighbouring farmer, notice of the trespass reached the

owner, who would not have remembered that the estate was his, had it not been for his tax-bills. A suit was instituted, the farmer at last driven off from what was not worth having, and the true proprietor ruined. A story was current thereabouts that the land was good enough before the owner gained his cause; but that he was a hard man, and that the Devil had a hand in the suit, helped him gain it, and then danced over the land where the sand was now seen, and singed the grass as he went off in fire and smoke. The men said they did not know why they should go where there was nothing to be got; and a foolhardy boy who had once been a birds-nesting there, was ever afterwards looked on with suspicion, as, in some way or other, belonging to the Evil One.

When Paul now looked back, and remembered that till a little while before the world had been bare of joy to him; that the soul, living without sympathy, had been a prey to itself, and that a solitude, more dreadful than if he had stood the only living thing upon the earth, had surrounded him—the solitude and void which estrangement from others makes about us,—it was as if he had past into another state of being; and a new

nature and new delights filled him with sensations of which before he had no thought. He looked upon Esther and his mind was one rapture. Neglected and passed by, as he had been, she had stopped and spoken comfort to him and taken him by the hand, and he followed her like a child. "Thou hast been my good angel to me, Esther, and brought me out of the darkness into the comfortable light. The spring of my feelings was sealed up, but you have opened it, and they run on now taking the hues and forms of all the beautiful and blessed things with which God has filled this earth for us. My heart is fuller of joy than I well know how to bear—it aches to speak it to you ; and yet its throbbings can tell you better than words can."

This was the over contentment of a mind by nature melancholy and not knowing how to measure its joys when they came. The happiness of such minds is always in excess ; then it seems strange to them ; they question its truth ; it does not belong to them ; they fear it cannot last. They look back upon their misery as their true condition, as one which they are bound to by some fatality ; and in their hopelessness they rush into it further than before.

Paul's state was so opposite to what he had been wonted to, that it seemed to produce some indistinctness of the thoughts and senses, and he could hardly have a clear persuasion of the reality of his happiness. It partook of the visionary ; and he began to fear that his hopes and imagination had cheated him into it. In his saner moments, when he could not question its truth, he doubted its stability ; and a vague notion that this was to pass away, and something, he knew not what, to take its place, unsettled the rest of his mind and disturbed its full content. A feeling, like those ill-forebodings which sometimes come over us and then go off again, was gaining possession of him, bringing back his old melancholy, troubling his reason, and distorting all he saw.

There is a strange infatuation in gloomy minds which makes all that they are concerned in minister to their melancholy, and they seek out causes of depression with an industry more eager and unrelaxed than that with which cheerful souls hunt after pleasure. It is the craving of a diseased appetite, which is never sated.

Paul found his melancholy returning ~~at~~ intervals. At first he shrunk from it with the horror

that the lunatic would fly from his fits of coming madness ; but at last, as dark thoughts began to gather round him, he no longer tried to scatter them ; the fate that he imagined himself born to was oftener in his mind, and his former distrust of himself ; and with this came his doubts of others.—“ It cannot be,” he said to himself, “ that I was made to be loved of one so beautiful and of so light a heart. The gloom that shadowed me about was a mystery to her, and she was curious to know it. She saw that I was depressed and miserable, and that moved her heart to pity me ; she found that her kindness touched me and made me happy, and this stirred an innocent pride within her, and she mistook it all for love. And, fool ! fool ! so did I. Ay, and there was no one near to place this uncomely form by ; and no gay, accomplished and ready mind, to play round the sluggish, unchanging movements of mine. Poor girl, she knew not me, nor herself then ; but the knowledge will one day be revealed to her, and with a curse as heavy as fell on man in paradise.”

Though Paul passed many such hours when alone, and was restless and impatient in company, yet the thought that Esther was his wife



was still a healing to his heart. He loved her with all that intenseness his nature was made to feel ; and it was with a kind of joyous adoration that he looked on her in his undisturbed moments. He yet could feel the reality of her fondness for him ; and he thought of it as more than an earthly blessing.

It was about this time that Frank Ridgley returned home after an absence of two years. He had been an early and ardent lover of Esther's. She had a great regard and liking for Frank, but not a particle of love for him. His case was a more hopeless one than if he had been her aversion ; for opposite passions run so into each other, particularly in women, that it is oftentimes hard to tell which is which. Perhaps Frank felt the truth of this (though he was not much in the way of philosophizing) when Esther refused him, telling him at the same time that she had a great esteem for him. For the matter of that, thought Frank, though he dared not say it, you might profess as much to my grandmother. He was angry, and mortified, and in despair ; and confounded, and not knowing what feeling he was suffering under, swore most solemnly that he would never survive his disappointment.—“ That's an unwise

resolution in you, Frank," said Esther. "Only allow yourself time to think about it till you are a little older, and you'll live to see the folly of it. —Forgive me, Frank; I do not mean to make sport of your feelings; but, for the life of me, I can't help thinking how bright and well you will look a twelvemonth hence."

The truth was, Frank was one of those whose ~~X~~ feelings ~~X~~ spend ~~X~~ themselves on the ~~X~~ outer man, and whose passions, violently as they seem moved, are but healthful excitement, compared with what those feel who look clayey and hard when they are agitated most. Esther knew very well that he was sincerely and warmly attached to her at the time, and that, would she consent to have him, he would make a fond husband, and wear black for her a full year after she was gone; but that his mind was not one of those abiding places in which we find decayed, gray trees, and young shoots, running vines, and mosses, and all those close and binding growths which look so lasting, faithful and affectionate. She pitied him as we do one who has a twinge of the toothach—which nobody dies of. However bent we may be upon dying of crossed love, it is no easy matter; next to starving one's self

to death, there is nothing which requires more resolution and perseverance. Accordingly, Frank returned in due time, glad to see his friends, with his head full of novelties, with much useful information, and a ready, lively way of showing it.

It was a damp, uncomfortable evening; and Paul and Esther were round the fire. Paul was sitting a little on one side, in the shade, now and then making some short, serious remark, after his usual manner, with his eyes resting on Esther's countenance, as she sat looking into the fire, pondering on what he said, and the many things it led the mind to. Her face appeared all thought, and her features had a beautiful distinctness, as their deep, silent shadows fell in strong outline against the warm fire-light that shone on her. At no time had love seemed to him so quiet and domestic. He thought that he had never before been conscious how lovely and dear to us humanity may be.

There was a smart rap at the door, and in came in full spirits Frank Ridgley. Esther, who was surprised and sincerely glad to see him, showed it in her benevolent countenance. His manner was a little embarrassed; for he had not

forgotten that he had once been in love, though now cured of it ; and remembering Esther's prophecy, he coloured and looked a little ashamed to think that she should see him alive and well again. Paul felt something like uneasiness at the expression of Esther's face, and an impatient doubt passed through his mind as he observed Frank's embarrassed manner. It was that old distrust of himself, and of his power to interest another deeply, making him question the possibility of a sincere and enduring passion for him, and not a proneness to think lightly of others' virtue, which haunted him. Frank was a man much below Paul in force of character, and feeling, and intellectual power ; yet he was his very opposite in mind and person ; and this left Paul room to harass himself with surmises, and torture himself with the agony with which humbling thoughts afflict proud men.

" Mr. Felton," said Esther, a little agitated at introducing Paul, " this is an old acquaintance of mine, Mr. Ridgley." His eye fastened on Esther, as if he was reading her very soul. He saw her agitation, but mistook the cause. He rose slowly from his chair, out of the dark corner in which he was sitting, and giving his hand deliberately

to Frank, and looking downward, said gravely, "Sir, I am happy to see you."—As the light struck upon his figure, and he took Frank's hand, Frank shrunk back a little, as if not altogether safe. The deep, and scarcely audible voice in which he spoke, his dark countenance, his low, muscular form on which Frank looked down, all seemed possessed of some strange power. Frank involuntarily turned towards Esther, as if in wonder that any thing belonging to such a being could be so gentle, and fair, and cheerful. Esther trembled as she observed Paul, though she hardly knew why; and seeing Frank looking at her, blushed deeply, for she knew what was passing in his mind. Paul glanced his eye swiftly on both of them, and bowing low, drew back into his seat.

The room was lighted, and Frank, who was of too cheerful a disposition to be made long uneasy by unpleasant thoughts, began in full spirits to talk about old times and all he had seen since leaving home. His gayety was not of that sort which we sit and look at with a good natured acquiescence, and are pleased to see so well played off; but it was communicative, driving away our troubles, and

making us feel for the time as if we ourselves were of too happy a temperament ever to be melancholy. He was a man of good sense, too, and of right honest and kind feelings, and therefore much better fitted for the true purposes of travel than those who go equipped with every thing that can be thought of except straight heads and good hearts. His gayety and humour were mingled with just observations, and softened down by the propriety and delicacy natural to his character; and these, with a graceful and elegant person and handsome countenance, and a certain deference of manner, made him a favourite wherever he went, particularly amongst the women.

Notwithstanding the effect Paul's appearance had on him, he knew Esther too well to think that any attention he might pay her would reconcile her to a neglect of her husband. This might be one of her singularities; but it was not to be disregarded. Besides, however reserved and silent Paul might be, no one could sit near him and forget who was by his side. Though Paul was distant and cold at first, the ease and propriety of Frank's remarks were not unobserved by him, and he was gradually led to

take a part in the conversation ; and when he did, Frank no longer wondered at his power over Esther ; though at the same time, (he knew not why,) he was conscious of something like uneasiness and distrust on her account. On the whole, the evening passed off very well, and Esther's heart was lightened to think it had ended so much better than it began.

When Frank withdrew, Paul became silent.—“ It is not yet quite two years since she first saw me,” said he to himself ; “ and who can tell how many times since she was a child, to that hour, she has sighed as she thought on some other man ?”—He stirred in his chair. Esther looked at him, but he seemed buried in thought.—“ And is it mere chance that has fixed her love at last on me ? And have the same hopes and same desires which rest on me, been breathed forth in silence for another when I was unknown ? And had she never seen me, might she not have looked as fondly on some other man, and hung on him as she will on me now ?”—It was hateful to him to think on it. There is no man of sentiment who would not gladly be rid of such thoughts if he could ; he practises upon himself to believe it was otherwise ; and though half

conscious of the self-deception, gathers some relief even from that. But Paul was made for self-torture ; beside, he had so long lived a lonely man, that what he felt, was not so to be shuffled off. He considered with himself, and considered truly, that there is not one woman in a thousand, who has not, at some time or other, imagined herself in love with another man than him she at last marries. It made him writhe with impatience.

At last Esther said aloud, but without raising her eyes from a print on which she was looking, "he is certainly very amiable."

"Do you mean that swine-feeder?" asked Paul sarcastically, as he looked up.

"I was not then thinking of him or his pigs," she replied, smiling.

"You should be more definite then, my dear. You forget that every one's thoughts do not take the same road with yours. Yes, he is one of the handsomest men I've met with, and of a very winning address."

"Handsome, did I say?" asked Esther.

"I know not that you did ; yet you think him so, surely, do you not?"



“Certainly I do; but I was speaking of his heart.”

“O, of his heart. Of that you know more than I do.”

“And well I may, Paul, for I have known Frank Ridgley from a boy.”

“Very like,” said Paul—then spoke of the weather, and soon left the room. He at this time believed Esther of a mind as open as the day; yet because his own person and bearing had nothing graceful or attractive in it, he made these properties of too much importance, forgetting how much less women regard such things in us than we do in them. He remembered Frank’s appearance, and the idea took possession of him, that there must have been a time when he had place in her youthful imagination. This was a poisonous thought to take root in a mind like Paul’s.

The next day, as Paul was returning home from a morning’s walk, he saw at a distance, Frank leaving the house.—“I thought as much,—a lady’s man, who plays his glove, and shows a white hand. We value ourselves and are valued on the turn of a finger nail; and what is worse, our sober, retired thoughts are put

out o'doors, and our minds fitted up for shows and gala-days."

Frank soon came along, looking fresh as the morning, and wished Paul, gayly, a pleasant day, as he passed by. Paul bowed his head slowly, and walked on homeward.

"And what have you there?" asked Esther, going towards him as he entered the room.

"Constancy, Esther, constancy."

"Give it me then," said she, catching it out of his hand. "Yet I'll not take it all. There, it shall be between us. Stay, let me have it again, and I'll plant it under this window that it may grow all together. And I'll water it daily."

"Look well to it, lest a blight take it."

"It is not so tender that it need watching so, surely."

"Yes, but it is, Esther—it is often blasted."

"I read not so of it."

"Then your books are a lie; do not trust them."

"I will not, nor myself neither. 'Tis yours again, and you shall tend it. I am too heedless and gay for such continual care. Come, lay by that sombre countenance, and fit you with a

more cheerful look, for we are to have a splendid ball at the village. Frank has been here and spoiled my morning, with talk of figures and dresses. And I know not but that you would have found me in full practice, had I not protested against dancing at high noon.—Now, take me not in earnest, Paul.”

“Would that I could tell when I might, Esther. My heart is ill at ease, and I cannot trifle now.”

“And is it I, who have broken its peace?” asked she, as she leaned fondly on him. “It was my hope, and all which made me happy, that I should be its place of rest and joy. I seem to you too much a trifler for your graver nature. I, too, was graver than now before I knew you, Paul. It is the overjoy that you have filled my heart with, which makes me so prattling and wild, like a child. ’Tis that I feel almost too much, and not too little. Yet sometimes it makes me thoughtful, nearly to melancholy, instead of gay. I wish it always did, for then I should be like you, and content you better. (And you would never then cast on me that look of sorrow and reproof which you did just now, would you, Paul?” she asked, looking up at him,

with a smile, as she rested on him, the tears starting to her eyes.)

"Be like me, Esther! You little know what you're wishing for. Be like yourself," said he, laying his hand on her open brow, "be good and be happy. Misery is but another name for sin,—for imperfect virtue. Could we cast off our frailties, man might walk through the afflictions, the losses, and wrongs of life with the calm of heaven within him, and its glory round about him. I've had visions of it, and they have changed this vile thing you lean on, to the bright soul and shape of angels."

She gazed on him without breathing. His face was turned upward, and he seemed as if seeing into the world above him. His look was fixed and calm as the sky. He stood for a time as if rapt in holy converse. By and by a cloud passed, his countenance became dark as night, and his head sunk on his bosom. Esther could look no longer. Paul seemed sinking beneath her weight. She raised herself, and he turned, and walked slowly out of the room. She would have followed him, but she could not move.

He took a path which led through the fields back of his house, and wound amongst the steep

rocks part way up the range of high hills, till it reached a small locust grove, where it ended. He began climbing a ridge near him, and reaching the top of it, beheld all around him a scene as desolate and broken as the ocean. For miles it seemed as if one immense gray rock had been heaved up and shattered by an earthquake. Here and there might be seen shooting out of the clefts, old trees, like masts at sea. It was as if the ocean in a storm, had become suddenly fixed, with all its ships upon it. The sun shone glaring and hot on it, but there was neither life, nor motion, nor sound ;—the spirit of Desolation had gone over it, and it had become the place of death. His heart sunk within him, and something like a superstitious dread entered him. He tried to rouse himself and look about with a composed mind. It was all in vain—he felt as if some dreadful, unseen power stood near him. He would have spoken, but he dared not in such a place.

To shake this off, he began clambering over one ridge after another, till passing cautiously round a beetling rock, a sharp cry from out it shot through him. Every small jut and precipice sent it back with a satanic

taunt, and the crowd of hollows and points seemed for an instant alive with thousands of fiends. Paul's blood ran cold; and he scarcely breathed as he waited for their cry again; but all was still. Though his mind was of a superstitious cast, he had courage and fortitude; and ashamed of his weakness, he reached forward, and stooping down looked into the cavity. He started as his eye fell on the object within it. "Who and what are you?" cried he. "Come out and let me see whether you are man or devil." And out crawled a miserable boy, that seemed shrunk up with fear and famine. "Speak, and tell me who you are, and what you do here," said Paul. The poor fellow's jaws moved and quivered, but he did not utter a sound. His spare frame shook, and his knees knocked against each other, as in an ague fit. Paul looked at him for a moment. His loose, shambly frame was nearly bare to the bones, his light sunburnt hair hung long and straight round his thin jaws, and white eyes, that shone with a delirious glare, as if his mind had been terror struck. There was a sickly, beseeching smile about his mouth. His skin between the freckles was as white as a leper's,

and his teeth long and yellow. He looked as if he had witnessed the destruction about him, and was the only living thing spared, to make death seem more horrible.—“Who put you here to starve?” said Paul to him.

“Nobody, sir.”

“Why did you come, then?”

“O, I can’t help it, I must come.”

“Must!” said Paul, “and why must you?” The boy looked round timidly, and crouching near Paul, said, in a tremulous, low voice, his eyes glaring fearfully through a chasm. “’Tis He, ’tis He, that makes me.”—Paul turned suddenly round and saw before him, for the first time, the deserted tract of pine wood and sand, which has been mentioned.—“Who and where is he,” asked Paul, impatiently, expecting to see some one.

“There, there, in the wood yonder,” answered the boy, crouching still lower, and pointing with his finger, whilst his hand shook as if palsied.

“I see nothing,” said Paul, “but these pines. What possesses you? Why do you shudder so, and look so pale? Do you take the shadows of the trees for devils?”

"Don't speak of them. They'll be on me if you talk of them here," whispered the boy eagerly. Drops of sweat stood on his brow from the agony of terror he was in. As Paul looked at the lad, he felt something like fear creeping over him. He turned his eyes involuntarily to the wood again. "If we must not talk here," said he at last, "come along with me, and tell me what all this means." The boy rose, and followed close to Paul.

"Is it the devil you have seen," asked Paul, "that you shake so?"

"You have named him, I never must," said the boy. "Strange sights I have seen, and heard sounds whispered close to my ears, and so full of spite, and so dreadful, I dared not look round, lest I should see some awful face at mine. I've thought I felt it touch me sometimes."

"And what wicked thing have you done that they should haunt you so?"

"O, Sir, I was a foolhardy boy. Two years ago I was not afraid of any thing. Nobody dared go into that wood, or even so much as over the rocks, to look at it, after what happened there."—"I've heard a foolish story," said Paul. —"So once, Sir, the thought took me that I



would go there a birds-nesting, and bring home the eggs and show to the men. And it would never out of my mind after, though I began to wish I hadn't thought any such thing. Every night when I went to bed, I would lie and say to myself that to-morrow was the day for me to go ; and I did not like to be alone in the dark, and wanted some one with me to touch me when I had bad dreams. And when I waked in the morning, I felt as if something dreadful was coming upon me before night. Well, every day, I don't know how it was, I found myself near this ridge ; and every time, I went farther and farther up it, though I grew more and more frightened ; and when I had gone as far as I dared, I was afraid to wait, but would turn and make away so fast, that many a time I fell down some of these places, and got lamed and bruised. The boys began to think something ; and would whisper each other and look at me, and when they found I saw them, they would turn away. It grew hard for me to be one at their games, though once I used to be the first chosen in. I can't tell how it was, but all this only made me go on ; and as the boys kept out of the way, I began to feel as if I must do what I had thought

of, and as if there was somebody, I couldn't think who, that was to have me and make me do what he pleased. So it went on, Sir, day after day," continued the lad in a weak, timid tone, but comforted at finding one to tell his story to, "till at last I reached as far as the hollow where you just now frightened me so, when I heard you near me. I didn't run off, as I used to from the other places, but sat down under the rock. Then I looked out, and saw the trees. I tried to get up and run home, but I couldn't; I dared not come out and go round the corner of the rock. I tried to look another way, but my eyes seemed fastened on the trees, I couldn't take 'em off. At last I thought something told me it was time for me to go on. I got up."

Here poor Abel shook so that he seized hold of Paul's arm to help him. Paul recoiled as if some unclean creature touched him. The boy shrunk back.

"Go on," said Paul, recovering himself. The boy took comfort from the sound of another's voice.—"I went a little way down the hollow, Sir, as if drawn along. Then I came to a steep place; I put my legs over to let myself down; my knees grew so weak I dared not trust

myself; I tried to draw them up, but the strength was all gone out of them, and then my feet were as heavy as if made of lead. I gave a screech; and there was a yell close to me, and for miles round, that nigh stunned me. I can't say how, but the last thing I knew was being mad and leaping along the rocks, while there was nothing but flames of fire shooting all round me. It was scarce mid-day when I left home; and when I came to myself under these locusts, it was growing dark."

"Rest here awhile," said Paul, looking at the boy as at some mysterious being, "and tell out your story."

Glad at being in company, the boy sat down upon the grass, and went on with his story.— "I crawled home as well as I could, and went to bed. When I was falling asleep I had the same feeling I had when sitting over the rock. I dared not lie in bed any longer; for I couldn't keep awake while there. Glad was I when the day broke, and I saw a neighbour open his door, and come out. I was not well all day; and I tried to think myself more ill than I was, because I somehow thought that then I needn't go to the wood. But the next day He was not

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to be put off; and I went, though I cried and prayed all the way that I might not be made to go. But I could not stop till I had got over all the hill, and reached the sand round the wood. When I put my foot on it, all the joints in me jerked as if going out of place; so that I cried out with the pain. When I came under the trees, there was a noise, and shadows all round me. My hair stood on end, and my eyes kept glimmering; yet I couldn't go back. I went on till I found a crow's nest. I climbed the tree, and took out the eggs. The old crow kept flying round and round me. As soon as I felt the eggs in my hand, and my work done, I dropped from the tree, and ran for the hollow. How it was I can't tell, but it seemed to me I didn't gain a foot of ground,—it was just as if the whole wood went with me. Then I thought He had me his. The ground began to bend and the trees to move. At last I was nigh blind. I struck against one tree and another till I fell to the ground. How long I lay there I can't tell; but when I came to, I was on the sand, the sun blazing hot upon me, and my skin scorched up. I was so stiff, and ached so, I could hardly stand upright. I didn't feel or think any thing after this; and

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hardly knew where I was, till somebody came and touched me, and asked me whether I was walking in my sleep ; and I looked up, and found myself close home.

“ The boys began to gather round, as if I were something strange ; and when I looked at them, they would move back from me.—‘ What have you been doing Abel ?’ one of them asked me, at last.—‘ No good, I warrant you,’ answered another who stood back of me ; and when I turned round to speak to him he drew behind the others as if afraid I should harm him,—and I was too weak and frightened to hurt a fly.—‘ See his hands ; they are stained all over. And there’s a crow’s egg, as I’m alive,’ said another. ‘ And the crow is the Devil’s bird, Tom, isn’t it ?’ asked a little boy. ‘ O, Abel, you’ve been to that wood, and made yourself over.’—They moved off one after another, every now and then turning round and looking at me as if I were cursed. After this they would not speak to me, nor come nigh me. I heard people talking, and saw them going about, but not one of them all could I speak to, or get to come near me ; it was dreadful, being so alone ! I met a boy that used to be with me all day long ; and I begged him

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not to go off from me so, and to stop, if it were only for a moment. 'You played with me once,' said I, 'and won't you so much as look at me, or ask me how I am, when I am so weak and ill, too?' He began to hang back a little, and I thought, from his face, that he pitied me. I could have cried for joy; and was going up to him, but he turned away. I called out after him, telling him that I would not so much as touch him with my finger, or come any nigher to him, if he would only stop and speak one word to me; but he went away shaking his head, and muttering something, I hardly knew what, how that I did not belong to them, but was the Evil One's now. I sat down on a stone and cried, and wished that I was dead; for I couldn't help it, though it was wicked in me to do so."

"And is there no one," asked Paul, who will notice you, or speak to you? Do you live so alone now?" It made his heart ache to look down upon the pining, forlorn creature before him.

"Not a soul," whined out the boy. "My Grandmother is dead now; and only the gentle-folks give me any thing; for they don't seem

afraid of me, though they look as if they didn't like me, and wanted me gone. All I can, I get to eat in the woods, and beg out of the village. But I dare not go far, because I don't know when He will want me. But I am not alone; He's with me day and night. As I go along the street in the day time, I feel Him near me, though I can't see Him; and it is as if He were speaking to me, and yet I don't hear any words. He makes me follow Him to that wood, and I have to sit the whole day where you found me; and I dare not complain nor move, till I feel He will let me go. I've looked at the pines, sometimes, till I've seen as many spirits moving amongst them, as there are trees—O, 'tis an awful place,—they breathe cold upon me when He makes me go there.”

“Poor wretch,” said Paul.

“I'm weak and hungry,” said the boy, “and yet when I try to eat, something chokes me; I don't love what I eat.”

“Come along with me,” said Paul, “and you shall have something to nourish and warm you; for you are pale, and shiver and look cold here in the sun.”

The boy looked up at Paul, and the tears rolled down his cheeks, at hearing one speak so kindly to him. He got up, and followed meekly after, to the house.

Paul seeing a servant in the yard, ordered the boy something to eat. The man cast his eye upon Abel, and then looked at Paul as if he had not understood him.—“I spoke distinctly enough;” said Paul, “and don’t you see that the boy is nigh starved?”—The man gave a mysterious look at both of them, and with a shake of his head, as he turned away, went to do as he was bid.

“What means the fellow?” said Paul to himself, as he entered the house. “Does he take me to be bound to Satan, too? Yet there may be bonds upon the soul, though we know it not; and evil spirits at work within us of which we little dream. And are there no beings but those seen of mortal eye, or felt by mortal touch? Are there not passing in and round this piece of moving mould, in which the spirit is pent up, those that it hears not, and has no finer sense whereby to commune with them? Are all the instant joys that come and go, we know not whence nor whither, but creations of the mind;



or are they not bright and heavenly messengers, which, when this dull form drops off, and the spirit is set free, 'twill see in all their beauty, and drink in of their sweet sounds? O, yes, it is so; and all around us is populous with joyous beings, invisible to us as the air."

So fully had such thoughts absorbed Paul's mind, that when, upon entering the room, he met Esther and her father, he started, as if the sight of flesh and blood were strange to him. At dinner he seemed but half conscious of what was before him; his look and manner were abstracted; and when he replied to any remark, his answers were abrupt and from the purpose.

"You are a good deal of a dreamer, I know," said Mr. Waring at last; "but I think I never saw you less awake to what's homely and substantial in this world we live in."

"They sleep, and their eyes are sealed, who do not look beyond it," said Paul, just so as to be heard.

The old gentleman looked at Esther; but her eyes were fixed on Paul, who did not observe it, for his were cast downward. Her heart beat with uneasy sensations, and anxious, uncertain thoughts troubled her. She tried to command

herself ; and as soon as she could, she spoke to him in an affectionate, cheerful voice. He looked suddenly up at her with a fond and rapturous gaze, as if an angel had spoken to him out of a cloud.—“ Ah,” said she, playfully, “ I’ve called you back to earth again, Paul.”

“ Scarce to earth,” said he, his suffused eye resting on her beautiful face.—He had quite forgotten that any one was by, till the old gentleman spoke. The blood went quick to his cheek.

“ What, so long married, and a lover yet ?” cried Mr. Waring. “ I thought love would have become a dearer sort of friendship ere this.”

“ I doubt,” said Paul, half smiling, and glad to turn the affair into a speculation, “ I doubt whether, in certain minds, love ever so changes its nature. It is a part of their constitution, and endures as long as they do, at least, I think so ; though I cannot tell what old age and gray hairs may do towards a change. It is the only thing that has made me recoil from the thought of being an old man.”

“ And what would you make of a pair of married lovers of threescore ?”

“ I like not thinking of it,” said Paul, with a fitful expression of pain. “ I would rather part

soul and body, than lose long cherished and dear thoughts. Nor do I believe they will be lost. Those who are good enough for a happy state hereafter, must rest their chief hopes and pleasures, even in their attachments here, on that which is fitted to live forever. The corruption of humanity that's now about them will drop off, but essentially, I trust, our feelings and joys will remain the same. What makes my soul's chief earthly happiness would be my misery, did I not believe it eternal, like the soul itself. To die, will be but the full opening of this same mind with all its good affections, which scarcely bud here, to the light and sweet air of heaven. Is what we tread on here, truth,—and our imaginations all a lie? I would believe that these high and gladdening conceptions were not all a cheat, but that they will one day open in glory on our cleared and delighted vision. What is beautiful and true here, though it perish for a season, will put forth again in more perfect beauty in the morning light of that sun which will never go down. Pardon my warmth, Sir," said he, suddenly checking himself.

"Then," said Mr. Waring, "you think the after existence of the happy but the continuance

of their earthly affections purified and exalted, along, you mean, no doubt, with a greater love and knowledge of God.

“Much so, Sir.”

“Has not your religion too much to do with the senses?”

“It is idle presumption to reason about what we know so very little of. I was simply saying what were my hopes and wishes, and what gave me here, that which seemed to me like a fore-taste of joys hereafter, and had at times persuaded me, that what I felt was not a vain imagination. I cannot so separate the natures of the mind and senses as some would do. There is not an earthly beauty I look upon that has not something in it spiritual to me. And when my mind is fair and open, and soul right, there is not a flower I see that does not move my heart to feel towards it as a child of God. All that is, to my mind is a type of what shall be; and my own being and soul seem to me as if linked with it to eternity. I know that to many this is mere folly, and that even to those of highest reach it is but vague; for what can we have while here but intimations and dim semblances of eternity. Yet for that, a man might

as well deny he has a heart ; for he will find it growing the more a mystery, the more he studies it. ' We think of angels as having shapes and voices, and if the unbelieving would say that the writ is false, how came the mind of man from the beginning to conceive of such things as true ? Is that connected with our highest faith, and what seems inborn in the mind, a lie ?'

Paul became silent ; he was filled with happier and calmer emotions than he had for a long time known. Esther observed his tranquillity, and for a while she was blest with the belief that it would be lasting. She knew that such thoughts were not strangers to him ; but she had seen them before only when they came and went swiftly, lifting him suddenly and wildly out of horror and despair, to a rapturous height, then leaving him to sink deeper than ever. When his dark thoughts and passions seized him, they seemed to her more like outward, terrific powers which drove him whither they would, than like things springing from his own mind and heart. There was a mystery about them that made her fear when they took him, and yet her heart bled with pity for him.

There are souls which have hours of bright and holy aspirations, when they feel as if nothing of earth or sin could touch them more ; but in the midst of their clear and joyous calm they find some dark and frightful passion, like an ugly devil, beginning to stir within them. The mind tries to fly from it, but, as if it saw its hour, it seizes on its prey with a fanged hold,—rending all beneath it. Perhaps there are no minds of the highest intellectual order that have not known such moments, when they would have fled from the thoughts and sensations which they felt like visitants from hell.

Paul's mind was of this structure ; and so long and violently had he suffered under such influences, that his natural superstition, heightened by them, had almost persuaded him his passions were good or evil spirits which had power to bless or curse him. The story and appearance of poor Abel haunted him. He called it insanity ; but he could not shake off the feeling that the miserable wretch was the victim of a Demon. He began to tremble for himself ; and when he felt his violent passions in motion, the thought that they were powers it was in vain to struggle against, almost drove him mad.

The night for the ball at last came, and Esther's spirits rose as the hour drew nigh. She had left home but little for a long time past, and though her love for Paul was almost devotion, and there was a peculiar sentiment and delicacy in his little attentions to her and the fondness he showed her, yet an undefined awe, a dread of the happening of something fatal, oppressed her daily more and more; and any change seemed to be the lifting of a weight from the heart, to let it bound and beat freely again. Her mind, and all her senses were peculiarly sensitive, and exquisitely alive to enjoyment. Her whole soul seemed to be in whatever she said and did. When Paul was happy, he looked on all this with a delight that cannot be told; but when a gloom hung on his mind, and he saw her eloquent, impassioned face and earnest gestures, he remembered how deceitful and prone to sin are the best hearts, how soon the warmed passions may turn from good to evil, and he hardly dared look on what he indistinctly dreaded.

Esther came bounding towards Paul with a step as light as if she needed only the air to tread on. "Rouse you, ye dreamer," said she, playfully jogging him,—“we are late. Look

up, and vow to me that I was never half so beautiful before."

"O, that I can vow to you from day to day; for you grow in beauty on me, as you grow closer and closer to my heart."

"What an angelic creature I shall seem to you at fifty then! How lucky that you had me; for who else would praise my beauty when turned of two score?"

"Be not too sure, Esther; my eyes may be shut to all beauty before that time comes. Then you may find others to praise it in you—if you will believe them."

"Not of death now, Paul, not of death now.—Come, let us be going. We've lived here in this stillness so long, that the sound of pipe and tabour will stir my blood like a new come Greenland summer."

"'Tis at a full and quick beat now, if I feel it right," said he, holding her by the wrist, "a little faster might do you harm."

"Beat it slow or fast, Paul, there's not a drop of it passes through the heart that is not warm to me with a love for you.—Think you I profess too much?"

"No, not too much."



“Why then look you so sad upon it?”

“To remember that I cannot always think so.”

“And why not always? Do you hold me of so unstable a nature?”

“Ask me not what I cannot answer you. It is not myself,” cried he, starting from her.—“They haunt me. I cannot ’scape them.—Away, away, I’m not your prey yet!”—He walked the room violently, his clasped hands pressing down upon his head as if his brain would burst with its working. His eyes were set, and his teeth ground against each other. He stopped, and his frame loosened from its tenseness.—“It’s over,” said he, spreading his arms wide, as if just set free.

Esther shook with fear as she stood fixed, gazing at him. When the change came on him, she went to him.—“Paul, my own husband,” said she, taking his hand, “come to me, tell me what terrible thoughts they are that tear you so.”

“Thoughts, call you them? Visions, shadows, horrible, horrible shadows! Speak not of them; call them not round me again.—O, Esther, I am sore afflicted;—I would that I might not suffer so. Pray for my soul’s peace, Esther. It longs,

it longs to rest quietly in its love for you.—Put your arms round me. There, I'm tranquil now."

"If they would keep you so, I would shelter you day and night, Paul, and look and think on nothing but you."

"Even here I'm not safe; there's no place of refuge for the <sup>2</sup>hunted soul."

"Above, there is, Paul, if we but reach upward."

"I've striven in agony to reach it; but when they will, these horrors, that have no name, pluck me down. But, come, they've left me now; and the bosom's free again."—He held her at his arm's length, and stood gazing on her.—"And could dark, terrible thoughts shake me so, before all this light and beauty! Why, Esther, I feel by you, like a cast out angel by the side of one who had stood faithful.—I've held you too long. Your father waits for you;—away, and forget my madness."

"Not without you, Paul."

"What, I! No, in faith! A married pair go regularly coupled at the hour set! No, no, I'm not such a rustic as you take me for."

"Do not so suddenly trifle in this way, Paul; it grieves me more than all; it is not your disposition."

"In earnest, then, the blood heaves too heavy through me yet; when it flows more quietly, I'll come to you."

He pressed her hand gently as he put her into the carriage, and gave her one of those smiles which always went like sunshine to Esther's heart.—He saw her look back after him as the carriage turned down the road, and stretched his arms out towards her as if to clasp her to him. As he raised his hands upward,—“O, heaven,” he said, “thou hast given her to me as more than an earthly blessing, let it not prove a curse upon my soul!”—He felt something clasp his knees, and looking down, he sprang as from the coil of a serpent.—“Were you sent to snare me now, you imp of Hell? How crawled you here, and for what?”

“I watched for you under this thorn,” whined out poor Abel, “for I shall die if I cannot see you and speak to you. And when you prayed, I came up to you, that you would pray for me, that I might be spared going, if ’twere only for this one night.”

“I’ve sins and tortures of my own enough. Pray for yourself, poor wretch.”

“I dare not, I dare not,” cried Abel, “lest He

come and torment me. O, help me. You were good to me once."

"And what mortal might can shield you against unearthly powers?"

"I feel safer when near you, though you make me tremble. Not a soul beside will so much as hear me when I call after them. I've thought, that, perhaps, nobody but you could hear me any more."

"And why I?—Don't put your lean hand on me."

Abel shrunk back. The loathing that Paul felt turned to pity. "Come, you are hungry, and must have something to strengthen you." Paul took the boy into the house; and having seen him fed, gave him an old rug to lie upon. "Sleep there, Abel, you shall not to the wood to-night." Abel felt comforted and protected for the first time since the thought of the wood entered his head. In a few minutes he was in a sound sleep.

Paul took his way along the greensward to the village. As he passed the bush under which Abel had been sitting, he involuntarily moved a little aside from it.—"Why has that boy fastened so on me? I like it not. There'll no good

come of it. When he is near me, I feel him as one cursed, and bringing a curse. The powers of darkness put him between me and mine; and promptings of dreadful portent are whispered in my ear." His mind grew more disturbed as he went forward, ruminating on these things; till having nearly reached the end of his walk, he stopped under a large tree, that he might gain sufficient composure and a clear brow to enter the room.

Not a leaf moved, and the stars shone in silence. Suddenly the music burst forth from the hall;—To Paul it was like a crash that jarred the still universe. "'Tis hateful to me;—noise, and folly, and hot, hot blood. Warm hands, and flushed cheeks, and high beating hearts. And where is she, who an hour ago would have sheltered Paul, and looked and thought on nothing but him? No more to her now than if he had never been—or had slept a twelvemonth in his grave. These creatures are beautiful and fair, and would be innocent as flowers, did none but heaven's winds visit them; but the world's breath blows on them, and taints them. Beings all of sensations; and so love's grateful to them. But it roots not deep and si-

lently as in man; from whom to pluck it out, tears up heart and all.—Leave me, leave me, let me not think on't!" He rushed forward, as if to fly from the thought.

Scarcely considering whither he was going, he was in an instant before the folding doors of the hall. Coming out of the quiet and the dim light, the flare of the lamps, the whirl and confused motions, and the babel sounds of a ball-room, breaking suddenly upon him, blinded and confounded him. He pressed his brows hard together to recover his senses a little, and then entered the room. One who is unused to such scenes can scarcely tell his familiar acquaintances at first. Paul was in eager search of one, as he passed round the room close to the wall. He had just gone by without discovering her, when a well-known laugh, though louder than usual, made him suddenly stop. As he turned, Esther sprang forward in the dance as if going up into the air. A bright smile, full of pleasure, was in her face, as she gave Frank both her hands; and as they bounded swiftly by Paul, without perceiving him, he saw the warm glow upon her cheek, her eyes turned a little upward, suffused and sparkling, her dark, floating curls rising, then

just touching her snowy forehead, then lifted with the motion again, her bosom tinged with a delicate tint, and moving with a fluttering beat. "Heaven and hell!" said he to himself, "ye work side by side in this world, though with opposite intent." Every nerve in his body seemed to shoot and burn with electric fire. It passed off, and a sudden weak, sick feeling followed it, that he could scarcely stand. A cold damp stood on his pale brow and trembling hands. He drew behind a couple of gentlemen, who were talking together, looking on the dance, and leaned against the wall. For a while he dared not look up; nor did he hear any sound till the conversation of the gentlemen suddenly drew his attention.

"What an exquisite figure, and how pliable and graceful," said one. "Every limb seems full of life."

"Yes," said the other, "and how sinuous the motions; they run into each other like the swells of the sea. Oh, she's a very Perdita in the dance. And Frank was an elegant looking fellow before he went away, yet travel has improved him wonderfully. I would bet my head on't, that she is sighing this moment at thinking

she said him nay, or had not waited to see him what he is now, that she might to-night unsay it again."

"Then she is a betrothed damsel, ha? Poor girl, that she should be in such haste. I warrant ye, this dancing partnership will put thoughts into her head which a lover would hardly like finding there. It will be well for her by and by if she doesn't talk in her sleep."

"If she can't teach her tongue silence then, 'tis a gone case with her already, for she was married long ago."

"And what gallant knight won her? He must keep watch and ward, for in faith I'm half a mind to make off with her myself, could I bring her to it."

"No hard matter that, if report speaks her Lord truly. 'Tis a sort of Vulcan and Venus match, I'm told, and that he looks as black as if just out of a smithy; and is glum, and says nothing. By all accounts, they are dead opposites in mind and body. She'll be on the wing all night, I vouch for it, and make up for the last month's caging."

"Poor girl, I pity her. But how could she find it in her heart to refuse Ridgley? I should



have thought that for a man like him, once asking would have been enough, any where."

"Why, lord, she no more meant it, than she did to die a maid. The blockhead might have known she was a coquette, as every one else did, and that she was but teasing him. One with half an eye might have seen what a favourite he was with her. Why, she would have gone to church barefoot rather than not have had him. The fool took her in earnest, and went upon his travels, and she married to vex him. Silly things! Unless she wears the widow's stole they may pine their hearts out now—or else the stars must wink at it. But come away, I'll look no longer, lest I covet my neighbour's wife."—And off they moved, arm in arm, casting their eyes back upon Esther as they went.

Every word they uttered entered Paul's soul. His brain felt to him tightened and hardened like sinews, with the dreadful thoughts that rose in his mind. In a moment, all the misgivings and surmises of his doubting and gloomy soul, on which, till now, he scarcely dared send a glance, were turned to certainties; and his eye fastened on them as if held by some charm. He pressed with his back against the wall with a

look of horror ; and with fixed glaring eyes, as if crowds of spectres were rising up before him ; and his hair stood up as if life were in it. Those near him observed his strange appearance, and drew softly back, looking at him and then at each other in silence, as if in wonder and fear at what they saw. He took no notice of what was passing, but seemed to be gazing on something terrible which none but he saw. The dancing had stopped, and a mysterious silence spread like a shadow over all that part of the room. Esther spoke in a clear, gay tone to some one by her. The sound struck his ear ; he gave a leap forward, his eye still fixed on the floor.—“ Ha ! are ye there ?” muttered he.—Presently a change seemed taking place in his mind, and he looked round him as if asking where he was.

Mr. Waring, who observed something unusual had happened, went that way, and found Paul standing alone, his eye dull and wandering, his whole frame trembling, his lips livid, and the sweat standing in big drops on his broad, pale forehead. Seizing Paul by the arm, as he called him by name, and shaking him to rouse him, Paul started, giving the old gentleman a look of amazement.—“ What mean ye, what’s the mat-

ter that you handle me thus? Ha, ha,—I did not know you, old man. Your daughter's fair and honest, is she not; and loves her husband truly, ah, truly, does she not? for she herself told me so."

"This pent atmosphere has overcome him," cried Mr. Waring, "he's unused to it." And he turned Paul, to lead him into the open air. Paul looked at him once more, as if to ask what he was doing, and then suffered himself to be led out of the room. He took, without seeming conscious of it, what Mr. Waring gave him; and they walked to an outer door.

"This night air's cold," said Paul, shuddering.

"Cold?" asked the old gentleman, surprised. He felt of Paul's hand and forehead; it was like touching the dead.

"You're ill, quite ill, Mr. Felton; you must go home. Let me find Esther."

"I've found her out before you, old man.—Stay," said he, in an eager whisper, seizing Mr. Waring by the arm, and looking close in his face, "the net's nigh set that's to catch that bird; would you scare her away?"

"This will never do; you must go with me then. Your situation is worse than you are aware of."

"No, in faith, it is not," said Paul bitterly. "It was, but I know the worst now.—Let's to the room;" said he quickly, "the fit's over, and I'm well again." ●

"Not well I fear," said Mr. Waring.

"Yes, quite well, mind and body both;" replied Paul, drawing himself up briskly and rubbing his hands together hard, "and I'm calm, perfectly calm." He turned, and leaving the old gentleman at the door, walked into the room as composedly as if nothing had happened. Those who had seen him, supposed that the close, hot air had oppressed his brain, and thought nothing more of the matter. Mr. Waring remembered his mysterious words, and was alarmed; for he had some little insight into the structure of Paul's mind.

Esther had mingled with the crowd at a distant part of the room; but Paul soon discovered where she was; for she was carrying on a brisk conversation with those round her. He drew near enough to hear her gay laugh, and the bandying of smart and pleasant sayings from one to another. Other thoughts and feelings filled Paul's soul. He stood amidst all the light and rattle like some black, solid body that noth-

ing penetrated. Mysterious shapes, which told him in part of something dreadful, were wandering through his mind with a fearful, shadow-like stillness—the scene directly before him seemed set off at an infinite distance; and his lonely soul held its own musings, known to none of earth.

“Can we love,” said he to himself, “and one be sad, and yet no secret sympathy tell the other of it? Were Esther cast down, though I saw her not, the spirits that are about us, and know what’s in our hearts, would whisper it to me.—Idiot! boy! Talk I of love? Is not her heart another’s? Ere I knew her, ’twas his. In mind—in mind she’s his now—at this instant, his.”—He darted from the place he was in, and taking his stand just outside the circle, and opposite Esther, stood watching her, without being seen. Frank was by her side, playing with her fan. “What, so constant!” said Paul to himself. “Could not the seas nor travel cure you! But I have that that will. Yet ye’re a faithful pair; and it would break two loving hearts. No, no, I’ll not be cruel. Why talk I of you, ye coxcomb?—What are you to me? ’Tis she, ’tis she; and I’ll see what’s in that heart, though I tear it from her.”

"And where's Mr. Felton to-night, that he's not with us?" asked one.—"O, at home, no doubt," answered a peevish maiden. 'He loves no plays, as thou dost, Antony,'" said she maliciously, looking first at Frank and then at Esther. Esther could not but observe her very significant manner; and innocent as her heart was of all improper thoughts, she felt pained and embarrassed. Paul watched the changes of her countenance. "And is her name so stale already?" said he to himself. "Do they tell her to her very teeth that she's a ~~V...~~"

There was a short pause. Esther was looking beyond the circle to relieve herself of the sight of those immediately about her, when her eyes suddenly met those of Paul, which were fixed on her with a deadly look. She started back with a shriek. There was a general alarm, and Paul pressed in towards her.—"What's the matter, what was it?" cried they all at once. "I know not," said Esther, trying to recover herself a little. "'Twas a—a spider, I believe."

"Ugly things those," muttered Paul to her in an under tone, as he half supported her,— "that lie hid in corners with meshes spread for silly flies. Beware, for they draw the blood, and

leave their prey hanging for the common eye." Esther shuddered at his words, as she heard his breath come hard from suppressed passion. She nearly sank to the floor, confounded, mortified and afraid. Never had Paul looked on her so before. She had seen hate, and revenge, and triumph in his eye. Then, lest those about her should suppose the consciousness of detected, guilty thoughts had overcome her—it was more than she could bear.—"I'm ill. O, take me away," she cried in an imploring tone. Frank came eagerly forward. "Not you, not you," she said impatiently, waving him back, while Paul supported her in his arms, his eyes resting on her pale, sorrowful countenance.

"Where's my child," cried her father, rushing forward, as Paul was bearing her to their carriage.

"Safe, with her husband," answered Paul, in a steady but gentle voice. The old gentleman looked up at him, and saw a tear in his large, dark eye. Taking out his cloak, Paul wrapt it carefully about Esther, and placed her in the carriage.

"Will you go with us, Sir?" said Paul, respectfully. Mr. Waring put his foot upon the

step.—“I had better not,” thought he, and drew back. Esther observed her father’s hesitation; and putting out her hand to him, said, with a forced smile, “I shall be quite well presently. Good night, Sir.”

She sat silent, as they drove homeward. She had not conjectured what were Paul’s thoughts. It was humbling enough to her, that her husband should have heard such gross insinuations against her, and should have looked as if some impropriety or trifling in her conduct, had laid her open to the slants of the malignant. “He it is that is insulted,” thought she; “and it is I who subjected him to it, and left no way of revenge to his proud spirit.”—She looked timidly at him. He was leaning bareheaded out of the carriage window. There was no longer any anger in his countenance, but it told of heart-sickening melancholy, and pity for the faults of those we love.—“Paul,” she said, but could not go on. He appeared not to notice her; but after a while, asked—still looking on the trees playing in the breeze and moonshine—“what were you about saying, Esther?”

“Nothing, nothing, only that I fear the change to this damp air may be dangerous to you.”



"Never fear that, there's a fever here," said he, striking his forehead rapidly with his fingers, "that must be cooled quickly, or 'twill sear the brain."

They drove on, Paul sitting as before.—"Have ye no sense of your glad motions?" said he, as he still looked out on the trees. "Can ye be so innocent and look so gay, and yet feel no joy? Sure, you have your delights unto you, and the morning sun shall take you in them fresher than when he left you. Blessed creations of a kind Father, ye know not sin nor sorrow; but man lies down and rises to them both."—Esther could bear this no longer,—"My husband," she sobbed out, as she sunk upon his bosom, "O, take me to you, and bless me with them; for I too am innocent, though not as pure as they are."—He folded her in his arms as tenderly as a father would a lost child returned, and she felt a tear drop on her forehead.

"You need rest, my love," said he, kindly, as he led her into the house. She turned and looked at him.

"There is no rest for me, Paul, when I have broken yours, though I never meant it."

"The whirlwind has gone over. You see me calm now."

"Calm and fond, but not happy, Paul. I never thought to live to grieve you."

"Our griefs are mostly our own creations, Esther; and so may mine be. I'll call myself to 'count for them, while you go sleep. To-morrow all will be well. Good night."

"Innocent, though not as pure as they are," repeated he to himself, as he walked the room. "Said she not so? As yet she has sinned in mind only.—Body and soul not both bound over to hell yet," he cried, stamping his foot in agony.—"Remorse, or fear, or I know not what, holds her still. Did she not wave him back as if she dared not trust herself? And speaks not that conceived guilt? And did they not twit her of it,—all of them to hear it, and I, her husband, standing by? And when she saw me, O, she confessed it all, all.—Down, down, ye thoughts, that rise like fiends within me—tempt me not—drive me not mad!" He rushed wildly from the room, as if pursued by spectres.

As he hurried through the passage to his study, his foot caught in the rug on which Abel was sleeping. He started back as if the powers of

darkness had crossed him in his flight.—“Have ye suared me then? Is there no way left me?” Abel lay with his limbs drawn up, and the muscles of his face distorted, as if some sharp pain wrung him. Every now and then his mouth drew convulsively, and he uttered broken, weak cries, as if he dreamed some one was tormenting him. As Paul looked on his shrunk-en body and ghastly face, it seemed like the carcass of some wretch that had pined away miserably to death, and that some imp had entered it as his place of sin and torment.—“Sent to make me a victim cursed and abhorred as yourself. I see it all, and yet you cling to me, that I cannot shake you off.” He raised his lamp to get a more distinct view of the object before him. The light flashed upon Abel. As he opened his eyes upon Paul, he gave a long shrill cry, hiding his face in his hands.—“Not yet, not yet,” begged he, twisting himself round, till on his knees. “One more day, before you take me with you. The deed’s not done yet; I cannot go till that’s, that’s done.”

“And has the soul’s working so changed the visage, that he does not know me? Is my fate writ with a mark like Cain’s upon me?—

Rouse you," said Paul. "Whom do you take me for?"—At the sound of Paul's voice, Abel curled down upon the floor.

"I thought He had come for me," cried Abel; "for They've told me He would come; and yet it could not be now; for They have been whispering me all night long that I must do it before I went."

"It?—What?" asked Paul impetuously. "Art mad?"

"I cannot tell you. Something dreadful, that I'm afraid to do; and yet it must be done,—and then I'm lost," he screamed.

"And quickly," said Paul, "for you're about it now, though you know it not. You're here,—within me. Dar'st look on him you're blasting?"

"I'm gone, I'm gone," shrieked Abel, clinging to Paul's feet. "Help me, save me!"—A loathing hate entered Paul. His teeth set, and his foot drew up as if he would have crushed the boy. Abel's hold relaxed, and he lay panting and exhausted. Paul watched him till his breathing became freer.—"Up, and follow me. I'll know the worst that waits me."

Violent passions and dreadful thoughts had now obtained such complete mastery over Paul, that they came and went like powers independent of his will; and he felt himself as a creature lying wholly at their mercy. He prayed to them to spare him, as if they had been spiritual beings that could enter him and move about him and torment him, as they would. They took shadowy forms and wild motions, becoming dimly visible to his mind's eye.—“If I’m lost,” cried he, madly, as he left the house, “if ye have made me a child of hell, ~~spea~~ speak to me and tell me of it. If cursed deeds must be done of me, whip me not blind and bound to my work, but let me know it all, and what I am, that I may put my heart into the act, and share your devilish triumph.”

Paul pressed on so fast, that Abel, with his shambling gait, could hardly keep up with him. The eastern horizon was shut in; and when they came in sight of the rocky ridge, the moon, which was just setting, threw its light over the multitude of its grayish broken points, giving to its whole length the white lustre of the milky way.

"It seems the path of Heaven," said Paul to himself, as his eye glanced over it, "but it tends not thither. The whole earth's a cheat, and I!—I'm its dupe. Yet, I'll be fooled no longer. Yes,—and they take angels' shapes.—She that looks as if made to be an inhabitant of the pure, holy stars, why she—she that looks all innocence in her sleep,—for then they feign too—whom and what dreams she of now? (~~And she'll wake presently, and talk to her pillow, and give it his name, and fold it in her arms as she does me, me, and force it him.~~)—Tell me, tell me, ye that haunt me, is it not so? Can ye not give me to look into her very soul, and see its secret workings, as ye see mine?"—Abel trembled from head to foot as he watched Paul's motions, and heard his terrific voice, without knowing what he spoke of.

The moon was down and sky overcast when they reached the rocks. Though Paul's walks of late had lain in this direction, he was not enough acquainted with the passage to find his way through it in the dark. Abel, who had traversed it often in the night, alone and in terror, now took heart at having some one with him at such an hour, and offered, hesitatingly, to

lead.—“The boy winds round these crags with the speed and ease of a stream,” said Paul.—“Not so fast, Abel.”

“Take hold of the root which shoots out over your head, Sir, for ’tis ticklish work getting along just here.—Do you feel it, Sir?”

“I have hold,” said Paul.

“Let yourself gently down by it, Sir. You ~~needn't be a bit~~ afraid, for ’twill not give way; ~~man couldn't have fastened it stronger.~~”

This was the first time Abel had ~~been of consequence~~ to any one, or felt his power; since the boys had turned him out from their games; and it gave him a momentary activity, and an unsettled sort of spirit which he had never known since then. He had been shunned and abhorred; and he believed himself the victim of some Demoniac Power. To have another in this fearful bondage with him, as Paul had intimated, was a relief from his dreadful solitariness in his terrors and sufferings.—“And he said that it was I who was to work a curse on him,” muttered Abel. “It cannot be, surely, that such a thing as I am can harm a man like him!”—And though Abel remembered Paul’s kindness, and that this was to seal his own doom, it stirred the spirit of

pride within him.—“What are you muttering to yourself, there, in the dark ;” demanded Paul, “or whom talk you with, you withered wretch ?” —Abel shook in every joint at the sound of Paul’s harsh voice.

“It is so dreadfully still here,” said Abel, “I hear nothing but your steps behind me ; and they make me start.”—This was true ; for with his touch of instant pride, his terrors, and his fears of Paul were as great as ever.

“Speak louder then,” said Paul, “or hold you peace. I like not your muttering—it bodes no good.”

“It may bring a curse to you, worse than that on me, if a worse can be,” said Abel to himself ; “but who can help it ?”

Day broke before they cleared the ridge ; a drizzling rain came on ; and the wind, beginning to rise, drove through the crevices in the rocks with sharp, whistling sounds which seemed to come from the malignant spirits of the air.

They had scarcely entered the wood, when the storm became furious ; and the trees, swaying and beating with their branches against one another, appeared possessed of a supernatural madness, and engaged in wild conflict, as if



there were life and passion in them ; and their broken, decayed arms groaned like things in torment. The terror of these sights and sounds was too much for poor Abel ; it nearly crazed him ; and he set up a shriek that seemed for a moment to still the storm. It startled Paul, and when he looked at him, the boy's face was of a ghostly whiteness. The rain had drenched him to the skin, his clothes clung to his lean body, that shook as if it would fall apart, his eyes flew wildly, and teeth chattered against each other. The fears and torture of his mind gave something unearthly to his look, that made Paul start back.—“ Abel—boy—fiend—speak ! What has seized on you ? ”

“ They told me so,” cried Abel—“ I've done it—I led the way for you—they're coming, they're coming—we're lost.”

“ Peace, fool,” said Paul, trying to shake off the power he felt Abel gaining over him, “ and find us a shelter if you can.”

“ There's only the hut,” said Abel, “ and I wouldn't go into that if it rained fire.”

“ And why not ? ”

“ I once felt that it was for me to go, and I went so near as to see in at the door-way. And

I saw something in the hut—it was not a man, for it flitted by the opening just like a shadow ; and I heard two muttering something to one another ; it wasn't like other sounds, for as soon as I heard it, it made me stop my ears. I couldn't stay any longer, and I ran till I cleared the wood.—O ! 'tis His biding place, when He comes hither.”

“ And is it His own building ?” asked Paul, forcing a laugh.

“ No ;” answered Abel, “ 'twas built by the two wood-cutters ; and one of them came to a bloody end ; and they say the other died the same night, foaming at the mouth like one possessed.—There it is,” said he, almost breathless, as he crouched down, and pointed at the hut under the trees.—“ Do not go, Sir,” he said, catching hold of the skirts of Paul's coat,—“ I've never dared go nigher since.”—“ Let loose, boy,” cried Paul, striking Abel's hand from his coat, “ I'll not be fooled with.”—Abel, alarmed at being left alone, crawled after Paul, as far as he dared go ; then taking hold of him, made a supplicating motion to him to stop ; he was afraid to speak. Paul pushed on without regarding him.

The hut stood on the edge of a sand-bank that was kept up by a large pine, whose roots and fibres, lying partly bare, looked like some giant spider that had half buried himself in the sand. On the right of the hut was a patch of broken ground, in which was still standing a few straggling, dried stalks of indian corn ; and from two dead trees hung knotted pieces of broken line, which had formerly served for a clothes-line. The hut was built of half-trimmed trunks of small trees laid on each other, crossing at the four corners, and running out at unequal lengths, the crevices filled in with sods and moss. The door, which lay on the floor, was of twisted boughs ; and the roof, of the same, had caved in, and but partly kept out the sun and rain.

As Paul drew near the entrance, he stopped, though the wind just then came in a heavy gust, and the rain fell like a flood. It was not a dread of what he might see within ; but it seemed to him, that there was a spell round him, drawing him nearer and nearer to its centre ; and he felt the hand of some invisible power upon him. As he stepped into the hut, a chill ran over him, and his eyes shut involuntarily. Abel watched him eagerly ; and as he saw him

enter, tossed his arms wildly, shouting, "gone, gone. They'll have me, too—they're coming, they're coming"—and threw himself, on his face, to the ground.

Driven from home by his maddening passions, a perverse delight in self-torture had taken possession of Paul ; his mind craved more intense excitement, and longed to prove true all that its jealousy and superstition had imaged to it. He had walked on, lost in this fearful riot, but with no particular object in view, and taking only a kind of crazed joy in his bewildered state. Esther's love for him, which he at times thought past doubt, feigned—the darkness of the night—and then the driving storm, with all its confused motions and sounds, made an uproar of the mind which drove out all settled purpose or thought.

The stillness of the place into which he had now entered, where was heard nothing but the slow, regular dripping of the rain from the broken roof, upon the hard trod floor ; the lowered and distant sound of the storm without ; the sudden change from the whirl and swaying of the trees, to the steady walls of the building, put a sudden stop to the violent working of his brain, and he gradually fell into a stupor.

When Abel began to recover, he could scarcely raise himself from the ground. He looked round, but could see nothing of Paul.—“They’ve bound us together,” said he; “and something is drawing me towards him. There is no help for me; I must go whither he goes.”—As he was drawn nearer and nearer to the hut, he seemed to struggle and hang back, as if pushed on against his will. At last he reached the door-way; and clinging to its side, with a desperate hold, as if not to be forced in, put his head forward a little, casting a hasty glance into the building.—“There he is, and alive!” breathed out Abel.

Paul’s stupor was now beginning to leave him; his recollection was returning; and what had passed, came slowly and at intervals. There was something he had said to Esther before leaving home—he could not tell what; then his gazing after her as she drove from the house; then something of Abel; and he sprang from the ground as if he felt the boy’s touch again about his knees; then the ball-room—and there seemed to be a multitude of voices, and all talking of his wife. Suddenly she appeared shooting by him through the air—and Frank was there. Then came his own agony and tortures again: All

returned upon him in the confusion of some horrible trance. On a sudden, the hut seemed to enlarge, and the walls to rock ; and shadows of those he knew, and of terrible beings he had never seen, were flying round him, and mocking at him. His own substantial form seemed to him undergoing a change, and taking the shape and substance of the accursed ones he looked at. As he felt the change going on, he tried to utter a cry, but he could not make a sound, nor move a limb. The ground under him rocked and pitched ; it grew darker and darker, till every thing was visionary, and he thought himself surrounded by spirits, and in the mansions of the damned. Something like a deep, black cloud began to gather gradually round him. The gigantic structure, with its tall, terrific arches turned slowly into darkness, and the spirits within disappeared one after another, till, as the ends of the cloud met and closed, he saw the last looking at him with an infernal laugh in his undefined visage.

Abel continued watching him in speechless agony. Paul's consciousness was now leaving him ; his head began to swim—he reeled ; and as his hand swept down the side of the building,

as he was trying to save himself, it struck against a rusty knife that had been left sticking loosely between the logs.—“Let go, let go!” shrieked Abel, “there’s blood on’t—’tis cursed, ’tis cursed.”—As Paul swung round, with the knife in his hand, Abel sprang from the door with a shrill cry, and Paul sank on the floor, muttering to himself, “what said They?”

When he began to come to a little, he was still sitting on the ground, his back against the wall. His senses were yet confused. His wife seemed near him, and he thought he saw a bloody knife by his side. After sitting a little longer his mind grew gradually clearer, and at last he felt, for the first time, that his hand held something. As his eye fell on it, and he saw distinctly what it was, he leaped upright with a savage yell, and dashed the knife from him as if it had been an asp stinging him. He stood with his bloodshot eyes fastened on it, his hands spread, and his body shrunk up with horror.—“Forged in Hell! And for me, for me!” he screamed, as he sprang forward and seized it with a convulsed grasp.—“Damned pledge of the league that binds us!” he cried, holding it up and glaring wildly on it. “And yet a voice did

warn me,—of what, I know not.—Which of ye put it in this hand?—Speak—let me look on you?—D’ye hear me, and will not answer?—Nay, nay, what needs it? This tells me, though it speaks not. I know your promptings now,” he said, folding his arms deliberately; “your work must be done, and I am doomed to it.”

There was an awful calmness in his voice and bearing as he stood. His mind at last rolled back upon the past. As the thought of Esther’s love for Frank crossed him, he grasped the knife hard.—Then he heard her call out, “Paul!” And she looked all truth and fondness. “O! hang with your arms about my neck thus, Esther, and I’ll never again doubt you.—Stand off a little. Is not my eye murderous?—Have a care; touch not this bloody hand.—Come to me, my wife; I’ll not believe it, ’tis false, they lie, all lie, all! O, spare me, spare me,” he groaned out, throwing himself down and beating the ground madly with his arms. “Let her die, if ye’ve ordained it so, but not by me, not by me.”—His limbs gradually relaxed, and he lay silent. The fit of agony had passed. He rose slowly up, putting the knife into his bosom. “’Tis all in vain. I yield me to you; be it when you will.”



He quitted the hut. The storm had passed over ; and as he stood with folded arms before the door-way, he saw the sun playing in chequered spots under the trees ; and the myriads of silver rain-drops, falling, or quivering on the leaves, dazzled his sight.—“ ’Twas Your accursed power that raised the storm and whirlwind, when you made a man a child of hell ; your work is done, and now they’re laid again.”—He turned his melancholy eye upward. The clouds lay white as snow-drifts along the air, setting off and deepening the clear blue sky.—“ Ye bright messengers from another world,” he said in a deep sunk voice, “ ye bring not glad tidings to me now, as once ye did ; your holy influences no more fall on me. Ye pass me by in silence ; yet once ye had a voice for me. Ye go to tell of hope, and speak holy promises to the pure in heart. Sin holds no communion with ye. Once all this beauty had been deep joy to me ; but now it lies upon the eye, but enters not this bosom.—No, no, another sense is here now, and other sights. Tormenting flames, like those I’m soon to go to, shoot up, and burn me—burn me. And this narrow body seems like a dark, deep cavern. And the eye turns inward, and

what sees it there? Spirits, uncouth things, sporting and fighting there. Yes, 'tis like the place Ye just now took me to, when ye made me yours, and put upon me this deed of horror.—Let me do it quickly, quickly. Make me not walk longer in all this brightness, a fiend of darkness—hide me from it, and I'll, I'll come to you."

Soon he became calm again. The look of despair passed off, and a mysterious gloom, and a fixed and dreadful purpose seemed to settle on him. He walked forward. As he drew near Abel, who was sitting where Paul left him, the boy quaked and looked aghast at him, as at one who had just risen out of the abode of evil spirits. And well he might, for there was a visionary horror, mingled with desperate resoluteness in his face, which would have startled a firm man who saw him then for the first time. He turned his dark eye slowly down on Abel, without speaking, and then moved on. The boy felt as if all strength went out of him. He got up with difficulty, and followed Paul with a watchful look, and at a greater distance than usual. He could scarcely draw his breath; and when Paul's pace slackened a little, now and then, as he was lost in thought, Abel would stand stock still, fearing to be any nearer.

When they at last reached the top of the ridge, Paul stopped and looked down upon the fields and houses which lay beyond it. Abel retreated a little, yet dared not fly. At length Paul turned on him. He shrunk back, and tried to look another way; but his eye seemed drawn back and fastened upon Paul's by some magical power. He writhed, and twisted, and clasped his hands, and looked in Paul's face, as if imploring to be spared. Still he drew nearer and nearer, as if a snake's eye charmed him, till he stood close to Paul's side.—“Think you, Abel,” said Paul at last, raising his arm and pointing towards the houses, “that the storm was up in that cursed place only, or that it drove yonder?—To hear Paul speak once more was like returning life to Abel.—“I'm afraid,” said he, catching his breath; “I'm afraid—but I can't guess;—and I shall never know,” he added, tears trickling through his downcast lashes, “for not a soul that I should ask would ever tell me.—No one speaks to Abel but you. May be they had better not, for I might be made to harm them, too.—O, save me from it,” he cried, falling on his knees before Paul, “you fed me, and spoke to me. O, I would die sooner.”

"'Tis done already," answered Paul, in a deep, firm tone. "Your work is done, and mine is doomed to me. There's no escape." Abel fell, like one dead, at Paul's feet.—"Poor wretch," said Paul to himself, looking down upon him. "The instrument of my doom too, and yet I would not curse you. Twinned with me in misery, and bound to crime by chains that can't be broken, I'll feel a fellow's kindness for you while we're here.—~~What~~ that's to come beyond, I know not.—And do You not only take us in our vices? Are babes and innocents all, all swept into your toils?"

He stooped down, and raising Abel, set him with his back resting against a rock. The boy opened his eyes and looked round him, as if not knowing where he was. Paul spoke kindly to him; and when he had a little more recovered, bade him take comfort, and then went back to get some water for him. He reached the place; and tearing some hairy moss from the rock the water trickled over, soaked it in one of the little hollows, and carried it in the palms of his hands. When Abel saw it, he gave an hysteric laugh; and seizing it, sucked it greedily through his long teeth.

"Can you walk now, Abel?" asked Paul, at length.

"I'm quite well again," answered he, looking up at Paul, as if to thank him.

When they had reached the clump of locusts, Paul said to him, "You must leave me now. You must be faint for want of food;" and he gave Abel a piece of money. Abel looked at the money, and then at Paul.—"And what good will this do me?" asked ~~Abel~~. "Nobody will sell to me."

"Not sell to you, foolish boy!" said Paul, scoffingly. "Why, that buys souls daily! Men and women sell themselves to one another for that, and swear before God 'tis all for love. Did you go to them, child, tailed and clawed like the Devil himself, they'd feed you for that, though 'twould be your last hour else."—Abel seemed comforted at this; and putting the money into his pocket, as he thanked Paul, took his way to the village. Paul followed the path that led home.

When he turned a little wood, and the house appeared in sight, he stopped suddenly. A sense of guilt and fear checked him; and it was some time before he had resolution enough to go for-

ward.—“What! shall I be driven from my own door like a beast of prey! They know me not, nor the work I am ordained to. Why does my very own make me tremble thus?”

It was a warm sunshiny noon when he reached the house, and there was that stillness round, which, in the country, sometimes pervades all nature like a diffused spiritual presence. Paul felt as if this brightness and quiet betrayed him. Every thing he passed by seemed to have a knowledge of him, and strange eyes were on him. He hardly dared look round. He looked up at his wife’s windows. The shutters were closed,—“Sleeps yet,” said he. “That is well;” and he entered the house with more composure.

He went with a cautious step to his own room, and locked himself in. As he passed near his glass, he started back, as if some evil spirit appeared to him.—“Have they not only changed my soul,” cried he, “but transformed this body, too, that the world may know, and shun me? Is the deed writ here—here on this forehead, that men may read it when they look on me?—I’ll not live on, the dread and mock of mortals. Now I’ll do it, now, while she sleeps, and end it.—Then take me to you, fit for the hell I go

to.”—His eyes gleamed fire as he clinched the knife in his raised hand, as if about to give the blow. At the sight of himself again, he dropped the knife and covered his eyes with his hands.—“Take, take that vision from me, that tells me what I am, and shall be! O, show me not myself, cursed and fallen! I’ll do it; but blind me to the sense of what I am and must be.” He had undergone too much to bear it longer, and sinking into a chair, his limbs relaxed, his eyes soon grew heavy, and he fell into a deep sleep.

Esther waked refreshed; for Paul’s affectionate tones and kind manner when she left him quieted her spirit. When she inquired for her husband, the servant said he saw him enter the house, and believed he was in his room. Esther went to the door and knocked gently; there was no answer. She tried to open it, but it was locked. She called out, “Paul!”—“Is the hour come?” cried he, starting out of his sleep.—“I’m ready then;” and putting his hand to his bosom, the knife was gone.—“Where have I been?” said he to himself, looking round,—“Was’t all a dream? Was there then no instrument of murder given me? And is there no deed of death on my hands?—She’s not to die

then, and I am free of them !” cried he with a shout.

“ Paul ! Paul !” called out Esther, terrified at the sound, “ let me come to you.”

“ Yes, yes, and safely you may come. I’ll not harm you, upon my life, I’ll not harm you,” he said partly to himself, and moving towards the door. As he advanced, his eye fell on the knife, as it lay on the floor. His blood ran cold, and a sick feeling came over him. Then his sight and all sense left him. Esther listened ; but all was still.—“ He’s dead, he’s dead,” shrieked she, trying to force the door. The noise brought him to himself.—“ Hush ! hush !” said he, in a low tone, as he picked up the knife with a shaking hand, and concealed it in his bosom, “ let there be no noise.”—He stepped slowly and softly to the door, and opened it cautiously. He raised his finger in sign of silence.—“ Hush !” he whispered, “ or you’ll rouse them. Do not tremble so at me. There is no danger yet ; the hour is not come.”

Esther entered the room. As Paul took her hand, she felt his cold and damp. “ Paul, my husband,” said she, as soon as she could speak, “ what is it ? Why do you look so wild and



lost? Rouse yourself; tell me what has happened."

"Happened," repeated he, unconsciously. He stood a little while silent and abstracted. "Did you ask what had happened?"—Then putting his mouth close to her ear and whispering eagerly—"To hear it would be your last. What's seen in the spirit, cannot be spoken to flesh and blood."—She shuddered, for there was something unearthly in his voice.

"Merciful Heaven," cried she, looking upward, "save him, save him; let him not go mad. Do with me as thou wilt, but spare my husband."—Her prayer passed through Paul's dark and troubled mind like the light.

"Is there yet a Heavenly Power? And are there holy angels to guard us still? The fiends have not all then, and their domain fills not the whole air! No, 'tis not all dark; there's light beyond. See there, Esther," said he, seizing her arm, as he pointed eagerly upward; "there are bright forms, dazzling bright, moving in it. Can'st see them?" He looked as if more than mortal vision was given to him. The sense of all about him was gone, and he went on talking to himself, as he gazed. "There they are,

passing away, till buried in the very brightness ! Now they come again, hosts, myriads, and with speed of fire !—The darkness, and the evil ones, too, are flying—they are gone ! Now the light gushes ! 'Tis all, all one flood of glory round me ; I'm safe, I'm safe, Esther !” he gasped out as he fell on her neck.

“O, my wretched, lost husband !” she cried, as she folded her arms round him, and looked upward with streaming eyes, “Is there no help for you ? Will not Heaven have pity on you ?”—Paul remained silent and motionless. “O, speak to me, be it but one word,” said she, raising him gently. “Look at me, will you not, Paul ?” He did look, but it was as upon one he did not know.—“Why do you stare at me so ? Do you not know me, Paul,—Esther,—your wife ?”

“I think—I remember something—Yes, 'tis all clear now. But they have not betrayed me to you ? They've not told you what's to be done ? Believe them not, they belie me. Did I not just now tell you I was safe ?—and then no harm, you know, can come to you.”

“Harm ! Safe ! What mean you ? Do not keep me in fearful ignorance. By the love you bear me, tell me what it is that shakes your reason so.”

“That must not now be. I serve the powers of the air. When you’re a spirit in Heaven, and I in darkness, you’ll know all.—There! they flit, like shadows, in the light, and keep the sun from me; yet you are in it. That tokens what is to be.”

He paused. His wildness left him, and he seemed to be musing. At last he spoke.—“The hour is coming, Esther—it breathes upon me now, when death will part us, and we shall never meet more through all eternity. Thy immortal countenance will then be radiant with holy joy; but I shall no more look on it; and thy voice of love will no more sound for me.—Weep not for me; it can avail me nothing; the doom is on me. Nay, nay, ask me not what I mean. The book in which my fate is written, is sealed to you; you may not read it.—I must be alone awhile,” said he, opening the door. “Do not linger so. The time is coming when you would fain fly from me, and may not.—No more tears, Esther,” he said, taking her hands in his, as she looked up silently in his face. “What is this world’s misery to those who hope for rest beyond it?” He pressed his lips to her forehead, and, turning back, shut the door after her.

When Abel came to the village street he walked through it with more confidence than he had done for many a day ; for he remembered Paul's last words to him, and felt as if he had that in his pocket which would find him friends again. When he reached the shop door, where he intended buying something to eat, it was near noon, and the little room was filled with the wise ones who had come together to take their dram, and settle church and state. He stopped at the door and looked anxiously in, beginning to feel for his money ; for he no more expected to gain admittance without it here, than one does to a show. He stepped upon the door-stone, and began playing his change from one hand to the other, looking first at it, and then at the shopkeeper.

"Where got you those white boys, you starving?" asked the man. "Come in and let me take a peep at them. Is't honest money?"

"I came honestly by it," said Abel, trembling, and venturing a little within the door.

"That's no concern of mine," said the man. "And many a glass of liquor, I should miss the selling of, gentlemen, if none but fair gains bought it."

“Who have you here?” said one, setting down his mug, which had just touched his lips, and moving off, as Abel sidled up to the counter.—“Why, ’tis the curst boy! You’ll not take his money, Sam!”

“Will I not?” replied Sam. “Hand over the bit, and tell us what you want. I hold man or boy, who has money in his purse, to be every inch a gentleman.”—Sam’s customers began to draw back. As some were going out at the door, he called after them.—“Stay,” said he, throwing the piece on the counter, “and hear it ring. There’s music for you, my lads, sweeter than a church bell.”

“Don’t take it, Sam,” said the customer. “He’s sent, and it will fare ill with you if you have dealings with him.”

“Not take it! Why, you would rig him up out of your cabbagings, fit to be the Old One’s harlequin, for another such piece as this,” said Sam, letting it drop through the hole in the counter, into the drawer.—“There, didn’t you hear them welcome him, the bright lads! What care I whose coining it is? The Devil may have his mint, if he chooses, and at little cost too. Who think ye, but he, set the wheels of that coach

agoing? And she within it, looking so smiling and innocent, sold herself to one as old as Satan, though, to my mind, not so handsome or proper a gentleman.—'Tis the way of the world, and I'll not be singular! Bread, did you say my pretty youth? There it is; but have a care that it doesn't poison you, for the Devil is the father of cheats, and his children had the making on't."—Abel looked pleased as he took it. "There's a sweet smile. Call again, my lad, but at another hour, for these gentlemen have no great liking to you, and you may stop the running of my tap."

"I'll never take change of you again," said the tailor, as he left the shop, "till that drawer's empty; for I would as soon handle iron at white heat as touch that piece."—Sam laughed heartily, and called out to Abel as he crawled from the shop, "give my compliments to your master, boy, and tell him, that I should be happy to supply him, or any of his likely family."—Abel bent his way towards the house of his protector, and took a seat under the hedge, waiting his coming.

When Paul was once more alone, his last mournful and serious words to Esther still

sounded in his ears. Her prayer for him (of which he heard something, as in a dream) as she folded her protecting arms round him, the home and shelter he felt her to be to him when he fell on her neck and cried out that he was safe, the expression of woe, and pity, and love with which she looked up in his face at leaving him, came all at once to his mind with a clear and calming influence. He felt the spring of blood once more at his heart, and his old affections flowed through him again with a living warmth. The passions that had raged in him like fire, went suddenly out; the horrors that had whirled round him and crazed his brain passed swiftly off; he felt again the earth firm under him, and saw that he stood in the cheerful light that fell like a blessing upon all things that lay in the beautiful and assured tranquillity of nature. It was like coming out of one of those terrific dreams, in which we have passed through multitudes of horrid sights and dangers, and finding it bright morning, and all as safe and quiet as it was yesterday. The mere returning of the simple sense of reality brought tears of joy and thankfulness to his eyes.—“Am I again amongst the abodes of men,” said he, “and standing amidst the works

of God? Are light, and truth, and beauty once more round me? And were all the horrors I have passed through, a conjuration and a lie raised to damn me? Come, and assure me of it, Esther; for though thou walkest with me here, thou seemest to me kindred with higher beings. O, I have gazed upon thee, till thy rapt looks and joyous and beautiful motions have made me think thee an imbodyed Spirit, revealing to me the creations that fill the world beyond us—a fair and passing vision, returning to the world, which, for a while, thou camest from.—Let me go to thee,” said he, rushing from his room, with eager delight, “and have thine eye rest on mine, and hear thy clear voice, and listen while you tell me you will not yet go from me.”

Esther was lying on a sofa, her full dark hair hanging over her face and snow-white arm, on which her forehead rested.—“My wife,” said Paul, as he kneeled down by her, “have I lived only to afflict you? I could throw away my life and count it nothing, to bring you peace. I should have been the soother of all your sorrows, and made your little daily joys; and is it I who



have broken your heart, and made life comfortless to you?"

Esther sobbed audibly.—“No answer for me, Esther? Then it is so. Why do I ask? And yet a vain wish is struggling within me that you might say something to quiet a self-accusing mind. My will is not in my act; but when I wound your heart, mine bleeds doubly.”

“I do believe it, Paul,” said she, raising herself, and resting on him. “I have not lost your love yet; but dear as it has ever been to me, it is of small worth without your confidence. It cannot content me unless I feel, as it were, our hearts’ blood mingling and flowing on warm together. To be loved as I would be, we must have one life, one being; our sorrows must no more part us than our joys. But you have troubles of the mind, and shut me out, like a stranger, from them; and dreadful thoughts o’er-master you, and fatal purposes, to which you seem driven; and vain surmises and dark givings-out are all I know of them. Is this love, Paul? Is it all your heart asks for? And can it be in your noble nature, to give only the poor remnant of your mind and heart to her whose whole soul would alone content you?—Yet this is

nothing," she cried, hiding her face. "Those eyes which had ever but one look for me, last night were turned in anger and with a searching sternness on me.—Last night was it? Fears and grief have made it seem an age since. This I did not deserve, Paul, however too poor a thing I may be for a mind, of a reach like yours, to rest on."

"Your words go like swords through me. Do not break down this overburdened spirit with your just complainings, Esther. I would not be what I am. Think you it is in my disposition to torture and afflict you as I have done?—Look up, my love, and tell me if I'm not changed. There is an inward peace here, which I never felt till now. I've been out of the world—out of myself; and this naked soul has driven through fire and whirlwinds; but it has come back to its place of rest, to its quiet trust in thee, and the repose of thy full love. Could I look on this face, and—let me not name it. Is not this eye open as the day? And do I not read truth written on this brow? When I first saw you, Esther, you seemed made up of sensations more exquisite than other mortals knew how to think of, as if of a nature between us and angels, and

moulded to live a perpetual self-delight. And when you touched a flower or took its perfume, I thought of the light and breeze, which shone with its beauty and was filled with its odour. You seemed to me too joyous and pure ever to have felt our passions or known our sins. And when I have sat by you, as I do now, with the soft touch of your hand in mine, and your eyes resting fondly on mine, I have felt as if undergoing a gentle change, and becoming a nature like unto yours; it was to me such as I have thought would be the intercourse of mortals when these bodies become incorruptible and glorified in another world.—Why should I try to tell what I now feel? It is a vain thing. Let me be still, while my senses are drinking in delight.”

Esther hung over him, and tears of joy filled her eyes. One fell on Paul's forehead. She wiped it gently away, and then touched her lips where it fell.

“Take them not away yet, Esther,” he murmured, “they are the seal of pardon for my wrongs to you, the pledge of your enduring love for me, the promise of unchanging joy through life, a joy that is to purify me, and fit me to live

on with you through eternity.”—His voice faltered, and she, too, saw a tear trickle from under his closed lids.

“O, I could have lived ages of misery, for an hour like this, Paul, were life to end when that hour had run out; but I feel that years are in store for us, blissful as our souls can bear?”

“I hardly dared look up,” said he, “till I heard your voice, lest, waking, I should find it a heavenly trance I had been rapt in. Come, let me rouse myself and make sure that all is real,” he said, putting his arm round her, as he rose and walked with her to the window.

“How fresh and new all things look; or rather, how like it is to our return to old and remembered places where nature still looks young and healthful though we are growing old. But *we* are not growing old, Esther, for life is again beginning in us. Is it a new creation, or are other senses given me with which to see and feel it? The boughs swing up, and leaves play as cheerfully as if a breeze, for which they had drooped and waited, had just blown on them, and the declining sun lights up all things gloriously. What a glow it sends over that hedge,” said he, as his eye passed along it.—“Hide me! Again

he's come—he follows me!" cried Paul, turning terror-struck from the window. Esther looked at him. His face was wild and ghastly, and he tottered as he threw himself on her shoulders for support.

"Speak, speak, Paul,—who—what is it—where?"

"There! there! do you not see him?" he uttered in a hard-breathed whisper, and pointing back with his finger, without daring to look round.

"That boy?" asked Esther, trembling, "I've seen him before. Who, and what is he, that looks so like a tormented thing thrown out upon the earth to pain and mischief?"

"Speak not of him—power is given him. I feel him on me now," he screamed as he sprang with an enormous leap from her.—"Off! off!" he cried, struggling as if to loose himself from some strong grasp.—"They call me,—thousands of voices in my ears. Hear them, hear them, Esther!—I come! I come!" he yelled out madly, darting from the room, his hair on end, his spread hands and arms stretched out before him.—Esther tried to call to him, as she ran towards him. Her lips moved, but there was no sound, and she fell to the floor.

The shouts and cry alarmed the servants, who rushed into the room. They raised Esther, and laid her on the sofa. She gasped once or twice ; her eyes opened, then closed again. At last the colour came to her cheek, and starting up and staring round her :—" My husband," she called out. " Where is he ? Fly, seek him !"

" Which way has he gone, madam ?"

" I know not. Bring him, on your lives, bring him to me !" She rose and hurried towards the outer door.

" Stay, dear madam," said her waiting woman. " Whither are you going at this hour ?"

" Going to my husband, if he is on the earth—or to my grave."

" Do not leave the house bareheaded, and looking so crazed, madam."

" Well, well, bring me something, quickly." The woman returned, and was about following Esther.—" Stay here," said she, " he may return while I am gone, and miss me. I can go alone," she murmured, as she left the door. " When Paul leaves me, what has the earth for me to fear or care for ?"—She took her way to a large, intricate wood which lay off at a distance from the house, and bordering part of the rocky ridge.

Soon after Esther left the house, Frank called to see her. The woman told all she knew.—“Gone out, and alone, and in such a state of mind! Which way?”—“Towards the wood you see yonder, Sir.” Frank left the house in pursuit of her. He was alarmed for her, for he feared Paul, though he knew not why. He entered the wood, and wandered through it a long time without seeing her. The light was growing fainter and fainter, and he became more uneasy. At last he found her leaning against a tree, pale and still. He went up to her, and spoke kindly. She seemed not to regard what he said, but asked, without looking up, “is he no where to be found?”—“Search is making,” replied Frank. “Let me help you home, for you are exhausted; and you can be of no service here.”—She put her arm within his, and walked on slowly, trembling from weakness and her fears. Her tears fell fast; for Frank’s friendly and gentle manner to her in her desolate sorrow, touched her heart.

When Paul left the house, his mind was so hurried and confused from the sudden shock and change he had undergone, that he missed the passage across the ridge, and continued wan-

dering along over and between the broken clefts, till at last he came upon the wood to which Esther had gone. He was pushing swiftly through it, when he suddenly caught sight of Frank and Esther, at a distance. He sprang forward, once, with the leap of a tiger, then stood still. Every passion within him seemed suddenly struck dead, and the mind appeared collecting itself for something fatal ; all was gloomy and hushed. When he followed them, it was slowly and with a cautious step, as if he feared his tread would be heard. He kept at a distance, without losing sight of them, till they left the wood ; then stood concealed at the edge of it, watching them as they went towards the house.

Esther's strength gradually returned ; and she no longer needed the support of Frank's arm. As Paul saw her draw her arm from Frank's, "'tis a pity," he said, in bitter scorn, "the wood could not have gone with you, that the world might not interrupt your loves." He did not follow them, but continued pacing to and fro. Sometimes a low muttering sound came from him ; and then again a vehement gesture showed starts of passion within him. At length, he seemed to wake again to a clearer sense of the



past, and his step quickened. "Yes," he cried, "she did cross me—I saw her—she passed like an angel before me—and then! then she vanished. Why am I fooled with this show of innocence and beauty! the fiends have all!—The universe is a hell; and all else is to mock and torture us with longings. What! flesh and blood, and look so pure, when the pulse beats high,—hot! hot! And seem as ignorant as infancy, too, as if the rebel body told them nothing. Well may the spirits laugh at our self cheating! And me, too, dark and ungainly as I am—gloomy—silent!—O, 'twas a pretty fancy in her to have a fantastic passion, to fondle my ugliness for a while, then turn to the other, and clasp him in heightened beauty!—Ease me, ease me of this torture!" he cried, darting from the wood.

It was near midnight when he reached the house. He stopped under an elm near it, without any settled purpose. Esther's father had been sent for, but was absent; and Frank, unwilling to leave the house, remained till late. The clock in the village at last struck twelve, the moon was down, and one black cloud over the sky. At last the door opened, and as Frank came out, Paul saw him by the light in the entry.

He came so close to the tree, that Paul drew up straight, as he passed ; but so dark was it, that he seemed like a blacker shadowy substance going by. "Now might I do it," thought Paul ; "but he's not my victim ; some other, doomed like me, must do that deed." When the sound of Frank's tread at length died away, Paul went to the door, and tried cautiously to open it. It was fastened.—"Shall I knock ? No, 'tis better so.—I have it. I'll prove her ; I'll know her false ere I do it.—To the hut,—to the hut ! I'll watch her nightly. And Abel, he who serves me, and whom my soul serves, him I'll use too."

"It may not be," he muttered, as he groped his way along, "that the last sin's committed. And shall I kill her for her thoughts ? Who then would live the day out, if evil thoughts were death to us ? Do they not mingle like blaspheming spirits with our adoring moments ? And shall we creatures of corruption ask of our fellows, love constant and untainted ? But to feign it so—to weep over me in excess of joy and fondness—so she protested—and I with a simple faith believed it, did I ? Women's tears ! why, they are very proverbs.—The wood ! the wood ! Puts her arm in his, does she ?—and leans on

him, too, in heart-sick languishment! Would, and yet dares not; loves the sin to very madness, and sighs, 'O, that it were no sin.' Away, away; let me not look on't!—'Tis all a lie—a phantasm raised by the powers of hell to make my soul theirs.—What! innocent, and died by my hand? Hear them—how they mock and laugh at me! I'll know more—all!"

He made his way forward as well as he could, but the darkness and stillness oppressed him. It seemed as if all life in the universe was at an end; nothing but death everywhere, and like a power. He was climbing a rock, when a cold, lean hand suddenly pressed against his face, and a shriek went up, that made the whole atmosphere one shrill sound; it seemed to him to enter and fill his very body. He could not speak, nor move a limb. "You child of hell," he called out, at last, "who set you on to this? Speak, where are you? Will you not answer?"

Abel, believing that he had touched one of those beings who continually haunted him, had in his terror fallen from the rock.—"Was it not one of them?" he cried in a feeble voice. "Is it you, my master? Do come and help me. I'm bruised, dreadfully bruised. I meant no harm."

"And what brought you here at this hour, so dark a night?" asked Paul, getting down by him.

"I was after you, Sir."

"And why do you hunt me thus? Is it to make me, like you, a child of the damned? Why were you under the hedge to day? O! that was a moment of more than earthly joy to me, and your blasted form crossed me, and flung me out from heaven!"

"Do not speak to me so," said Abel. "I do what I must do: and they will never let me leave you any more."

"Well! well! but what made you look so soon for me here again?"

"I heard you cry out, and saw you run from the house; and then your wife fell, I thought, as she passed the window; and then I remembered what you told me, and what They are always telling me about something to be done. And it was put into my mind that that was it; and, somehow, I can't tell how, that I had made you kill her." Paul shuddered. "I would have run after you; but I was afraid they would see me and catch me; so I crawled through the hedge, and went away round the house; and

when I got there I could see nothing of you. And I looked all along this passage and over the wood. At last, Sir, I went to the very hut, and looked in,—I did, truly, Sir, though something glimmered over my eyes so, I could hardly see. I couldn't find you anywhere; so I thought I would go back to the house and wait till night.” —There was nothing more said. Abel soon fell asleep, while Paul sat musing till daybreak.

The clouds now began to break up and move off like an army of giants; and the sun soon appeared, flinging his light across them, and throwing over them gorgeous apparel of purple and gold; making them fit attendants on such a king.—“Rouse you and follow me,” said Paul, shaking Abel by the arm.

As he drew near the hut, the vision he had seen there, the world of terrors that had been opened to him in trance, and the instrument then put into his hand, and for a purpose of which he could not doubt, came all to his mind like a terrible and fatal certainty from which there was no turning away. He did not recoil in horror; there was no shuddering at the thought of the deed, no agony of prayer for escape. It acted like long dungeon darkness upon him. A sullen, gloomy

stillness spread over his mind, dulling his senses, and filling the soul with one dark, sleepy thought, dreamlike and dim. He entered the hut slowly, and stood in the middle of it. No muttering sound came from him, nor did he move a limb; his eyes rolled like a blind man's, seeing nothing, and searching for light. Abel, who had ventured as far as the door, stood aghast and almost breathless, gazing on him; looking for the moment that he would sink into the ground or be swept off in sheets of fire. It was nearly an hour before there was any motion in him. At last his head sunk on his chest, his eyes were cast down, and Abel heard him breathe, once, long and heavy. He came towards the door with a slow, wandering step. Abel shrunk from him, as if he had been a dead man put in motion. He went to the edge of the bank, and sat down upon the roots of the pine, his feet resting on the sand. Abel still kept his eye upon him in awful suspense. There was a slender stone lying amongst the roots. Paul's eye at last fell on it, and became fixed. By and by he put out his hand and took it up. He continued a long while turning it over, and feeling of it, and looking at it on all sides. He put his hand to his bosom,

then drew it back, giving a nod, as if saying, all was as it should be. "Come hither, Abel," he said. Abel went, as if drawn to him. "Here's money for food," he said, taking some from his pocket. Abel put out his hand, but jerked it back as Paul's came near it; and the money fell on the sand. He stooped and picked it up. Paul did not seem to notice his fears.— "Go next to my house; find out all you can, and bring me word. Think not to betray me," he continued, without looking up. "I am with you wherever you go."—Abel seemed to wither at the words. Paul's eye was fixed on him in side glance, till out of sight. Then looking cautiously round, he drew the knife slowly from his bosom. It was pointed. He felt of it. The point was dull. He drew it once across the stone. The sound curdled his blood. He went on with his work. The sun flashed upon him from the sand, there was no breeze amongst the branches, and nothing stirring for miles round. No sound reached his ear, but the hot, singing noise of the insects under the tree, and the whetting of the knife. Blazing noon came, and Paul still went on with his work, stopping only to feel the point of the knife, examine its handle and scrape.

off the rust about it. The sun was at last about setting ; no cloud near it. It was glowing ; and its whole rim clearly marked. He looked on it wistfully, and seemed to pray in mind to it, not to forsake him. It half disappeared, then shot suddenly and silently down. His eyes shut ; his face for a moment was tremulous and mournful, but he did not sigh. When he looked up again, there were no bright tree-tops, no holy vesper of birds ; it was all sad, still twilight. Presently a light night-breeze passed over the pines, which sent out a low, mourning sound. It struck on his ear like the notes of spirits wailing the newly departed. He started up, and looked into the wood, as if he saw there the passing pall. He waved his hand once or twice before his eyes, to scatter the vision ; then turning round again, and placing the stone back amongst the roots, and putting the knife in his bosom, went and seated himself before the hut.

Abel returned at night, but with little news. The servants, he said, were continually going out and in, but they would not look at him, nor answer him when he spoke to them.

“ Did you see none besides the servants ? ”



"Only young Mr. Frank Ridgley. He went into the house about noon ; but I saw nothing more of him."

"I'll know where he is to be seen then," muttered Paul, rising.

He passed on through the wood and passage, then took his way to the house. All was quiet. He walked round it, but saw nothing. It was to him like a place he was shut out from for ever, the only blessed spot in a world where all else was cursed. He stood looking on it, with longing and home-sickness. By and by a light appeared in his wife's chamber. He raised his eyes to it as to a loved star. Presently Esther passed near the window. At the sight of her he covered his eyes with his hand. He could bear it no longer ; but rushing from the house, hurried back to the hut. ●

The next morning Abel was sent again ; and the day was wearing away with Paul like the former. He seemed scarcely conscious what he was doing, or what was the purpose of his mind. Abel returned a little past noon, telling him that he saw his wife with Frank, going toward the wood, on the other side of the ridge, about an hour before. Paul sprang up, and ran for-

ward, Abel following him. He went over every mound and through every valley. Frank, however, had, in the mean time, returned with Esther from searching after her husband; (her father having before taken another rout) and recollecting the Devil's Haunt, as it was called, set off alone for it immediately. After much clambering and toil he reached it, traversed the whole ground, and examined the hut all round; but no trace appeared of man's having been there for years. He returned late, tired and disappointed.

The sight of the wood, and what he had witnessed there, excited Paul's mind, so that he continued like a dog in full chase through it till near midnight, without considering how idle was his search at that hour. At last he became exhausted, his torpor returned, and he went back to his hiding place, like one walking in his sleep.

About dusk, the following day, Abel returned with the information that Esther's father was to set off the next morning on a journey of a few days. —“Then,” thought Paul, “will be my time to make all sure. No husband, nor father by, still rooms, and moonlight. Will they not put toys into the brain, and make the heart beat?”

“You must see him start,” he said to Abel, “and mark who goes with him.”

Abel was in full time to see Mr. Waring enter his carriage. He had set off to make Paul's father acquainted with what had happened, and to consult with him what course to pursue. He would have gone sooner, had he not been afraid to leave Esther, whom he staid with to sooth and comfort; for her mind was nearly unsettled. Frank promised, at his going, that no pains should be spared to discover Paul, and that he would be as a brother to Esther. The old gentleman left home with a sorrowful, misgiving heart; and Abel hastened to make known his departure, which took place about noon.

Paul sat as he had done each day before, in the same spot, passing the knife slowly over the stone, then stopping and feeling of it, and looking it over, seeming but faintly conscious of what he was about. His expression, though dark, was dull and abstracted, and all his motions heavy, slow and uncertain. The blood moved sluggishly, and life seemed scarcely going on in him. When Abel came up, Paul did not, as usual, conceal the knife. Abel knew it instantly, though now bright and sharpened. All his horrors rushed upon him; his knees knocked against each other, his hands struck

against his thighs, his eyes glared wildly, and he fell on the sand, at Paul's feet.—“The knife!” he cried, “hide it! hide it! there's murder!—the deed's doing, now, now! Save me! take me out o'this blood!” Paul leaped upon the bank, and stood looking down on Abel in stupid horror. He seemed to him struggling in a red, clotted sea, which presently appeared sinking into the ground, leaving drops here and there rolling on the sand, till at last he saw nothing more of them.

Abel recovered slowly; and raising himself on his knees, looked imploringly in Paul's face. He saw nothing there but an unchanging, sullen gloom.

“And what do you bring me?” asked Paul.

“I saw him leave the house in his carriage, this noon.”

“Alone?”

“Yes, Sir, alone.”

“To night it must be done then. Do you not hear them telling me, Abel?”

“Send me not again!” cried Abel. “O, spare me!”

“Is it not fated, boy? Think you the bonds of hell, that now hold you, can be broken?”

Look in ; is not He there, busy at your heart ? Your work is doing—mine's to come, quickly."

" We're lost then !" cried Abel, springing up. " Let me go with you."

Paul continued wandering through the wood ; Abel following close after him, wherever he turned. They went on in silence ; Paul now and then sending a glance back on Abel, as if he were some evil thing dogging him at his heels.

He at last bent his way to the passage over the ridge ; and when he had passed it, stopped suddenly, turning his eye on Abel. Abel came up. Paul pointed towards the house.—" Bring me word quickly." He then sat down upon a rock, gazing, like an outcast, upon the distant chimney-tops of his own home, while Abel crawled away to his appointed task. Before long, Abel returned, saying he had been round the house but saw nothing, till at last, as he was coming away, Mr. Ridgley passed him, and went in. A flush crossed Paul's cheek ; but he said nothing.

Frank, according to his promise to her father, went to see Esther. She was walking the room, when he entered, her arms folded, her long, dark

hair fallen round her pale face and sunken eye. She looked up at him, as asking if there were any good thing to tell her. Frank understood it. "Nothing as yet," he said, "but I hope—" She shook her head despondingly, as she turned away and walked to the window. "Do not despair so," said he, going towards her, "all may be right again in a few days."—She drew up, as she turned round upon him. Her look was mournful, with something of reproach in it, as if it were not in his nature to know what she felt, and that he was trying to cheat a common sorrow.—He shrunk back, and moved towards the door. She followed hastily after him, seizing him by the arm, "Nay, nay, go not from me so; trouble has made me strange. My more than brother," said she, giving him her pallid hand, "if you never see me again, do not remember that I ever looked in unkindness on you. Or if I ever spoke lightly when you were earnest, forget it, will you?—It seems to me, I think," she said, after a pause, and passing her hand over her brow, as if trying to recall her thoughts,—"I think I once made light of what you said to me.—Well, well, there's no more trifling in this world.—Yes, others may, but I may not.—"

All's dark here ;—go where it's brighter !” said she, motioning him from her. He looked at her earnestly. He saw the hurried state of mind pass off, and her calm sorrow returning. He bade her a kind good night, saying he would see her again in the morning.—“Perhaps so,” said she to herself, as he left the house.

She stood at the door, looking upward at the stars, and then upon the fair, silent moon, whose light fell like sleep upon the earth. “So I stood,” said she, “and so the moon shone on us, when he first told me that he loved me.—And there—there he comes !” she cried, as her eye caught the figure of a man descending a hill in the road. He sunk gradually down, till lost behind the hedge. At last she heard his step, as he drew near the house. “Paul !” she called out, in an eager, shrill voice. There was no answer, but that of the sharp taunting echoes that rang off amongst the rocks. “He’s dead,” said she, shuddering, “and they mock me with it !” She listened with a beating heart. The man passed by, and the sound of his steady tread, died slowly away. She walked back into the parlour ; and lying down on the sofa, her sufferings and present state wandered like a dream through her mind.

Mr. Waring began his journey; but the farther he went from home, the more troubled he became. A misgiving, which he could not control, took possession of him; and he at last ordered his servant to drive back. As soon as he reached home, he set off for his daughter's house.

Paul had remained seated on the rock. Abel was a little below him, looking wistfully and eagerly at him, as if his very life depended upon each look and motion of Paul's. For a long time, there was no more movement or change of expression, than if he had been a statue cut out of the rock he sat on. But as the time drew near, the heavy, settled gloom broke slowly up, and troubled and fearful thoughts began to stir themselves in his mind. Abel saw sudden tremblings pass over his frame, and a twitching of the muscles of the face. As the huge, mysterious shadows of evening gathered round him, he looked hastily about, and there were sudden flashings of the eye. He muttered something, as if the shadows had been spirits come to warn and watch him to his work. Abel looked on with clasped hands, as if praying it might not be, till he became so weak that he could hardly



keep his seat. "They are on him now," cried Abel to himself. "O, how they torture him! And they are coming—I feel them coming—they are seizing me!"—A cold sweat ran over his body.

The twilight died away. For a while Paul became motionless again, and seemed lost in thought; till leaping suddenly to the ground, with his eye eagerly fixed, grasping the knife and crying out, "On! on! I'll follow you!" he rushed swiftly forward.—"Stay! stay!" shrieked Abel, darting after him, and seizing upon the skirts of his coat. Paul ran on, till he dragged Abel to the earth, and his hold loosened. He turned, and saw the poor boy stretched on the ground.—"Stop, let me go with you," gasped out Abel, "do not murder—murder them!"

"Murder? The deed's yours—Theirs. They who set you on to curse me—all do it.—'Tis done! One hell swallows up all!" he screamed, spurning Abel from him, and rushing on again. This was too much for Abel's weakened reason. To believe he had been used as the eternal curse of the man who had been kind to him and nourished him, when no one else would so much as look on him, and to be thrown off at last by

him, too! He sprang from the ground, he leaped, he danced, he shouted, and ran in, mad, amongst the rocks.

When Mr. Waring reached the house, he found his daughter lying in a state of mind but faintly conscious of what had passed. He took her hand and called her by name. She looked up at him surprised.—“I thought, you had gone, Sir. Why are you here?” she asked eagerly, and getting up. “Is he found, is he mad—dead?”

“We have discovered nothing; but I was unwilling to leave you.”

“Then you would not leave me; yet he could—he could leave me—break my heart, and leave me to die alone, all alone.—Do not blame me, Paul; I meant nothing. I know, mortal cannot tell or think how much you love me.—Come, let me part back your hair; I must smooth that brow, too. There! there! Now you look as you do when you call me your own Esther.”

“My child, my daughter,” said her father, taking her hand again, “try to recollect yourself.”

“I do now,” she said; “but my mind wanders strangely. O, my father, he had a soul so large!

And when wild thoughts, I know what they were, did not possess it, it was all so full of love for me ! They fired his brain, and he's gone away to die, none know where, and I cannot go to him.—But I, too, shall die soon ; and then I'll meet him where there's no more trouble," she sobbed out, as she fell on her father's neck, while he supported her in his arms.

At this instant Paul reached one of the windows, the blinds of which were shut. There was a dim light in the room. He had heard that the father had gone on his journey ; and not long before, Abel had seen Frank go into the house. He could just perceive his wife hanging round some one's neck, and the man's arm round her waist. At the sight, he gave a shout of demoniac triumph, and ran from the window. Loud as it was, Esther was too much lost in her wretchedness to hear it. Her father was alarmed ; and without telling her what he had heard or suspected, advised her to rest awhile, and then went out with the servants. They returned disappointed. He told Esther he would not leave the house that night, as she was not well. At a late hour, all being still abroad, they retired to rest ; and Esther, worn with her distress, soon fell into a deep sleep.

Paul drew near the house once more, and watched till the last light was put out.—“The innocent and guilty both sleep, all but Paul. Not even the grave will be a resting place for me. They hunt and drive me to the deed ; and when ’tis done, will snatch the abhorred soul to fires and tortures. Why should I rest more ? The bosom I slept sweetly on—blissful dreams stealing over me—the bosom that to my delighted soul seemed all fond and faithful—why, what harboured in it ? Lust and deceit, and sly, plotting thoughts, showing love where they most loathed. They stung me,—ay, in my sleep, crept out upon me, and stung me to madness—poisoned my very soul—hot, burning poisons !—Peace, peace, your promptings, Ye that put me to this deed,—drive me not mad ! Am I not about it ?”

He walked up cautiously to the door, and taking a key from his pocket, unlocked it, and went in. There was now a suspense of all feeling in him. He entered the parlour. His wife’s shawl was hanging on the back of a chair ; books in which he had read to her were lying on the table, and her work-table, near it, open. His eye passed over them, but

there was no emotion. He left the room, and ascended the stairs with a slow, soft step, stealing through his own house cautiously as a thief. He unlocked the door of his dressing-room, and passed on without noticing any part of it. His hand shook as he partly opened his wife's chamber door. He listened—all was still. He cast his eye round, then entered and shut the door after him. He walked up to her bed without turning his eyes towards it, and seated himself down upon it, beside her. Then it was he dared to look on her, as she lay in all her beauty, wrapt in a sleep so gentle he could not hear her breathing. She looked as if an angel talked with her in her dreams. Her dark, glossy hair had fallen over her bright, fair neck and bosom, and the moonlight, striking through it, penciled it in beautiful thready shadows on her.

Paul sat for a while with folded arms, looking down on her. His eye moved not, and in his dark face was the unchanging hardness of stone. His mind appeared elsewhere. There was no longer feeling in him. He seemed waiting the command of some stern power. The order at last came. He laid his hand upon her heart, and felt its regular beat; then drew the knife

from his bosom. Once more he laid his hand upon her heart; then put the point there. He pressed his eyes close with one hand, and the knife <sup>sank</sup> to the handle. There was one convulsive start, and a low groan. He looked on her. A slight flutter passed over her frame, and her filmy eyes opened on him once; but he seemed as senseless as the body that lay before him. The moon shone fully on the corpse, and on him that sat by it, and the silent night went on. By and by up came the sun in the hot flushed sky, and sent his rays over them. Paul moved not, nor heeded the change—there was no noise, nor motion—there were they two together like two of the dead.

At last Esther's attendant entered suddenly, and saw the gloomy figure of Paul before her. She ran out with a cry of terror; and in a moment the room was filled with servants. The old man came in, trembling and weak; no tear came from him, nor a groan. He bowed his head, as saying, it is done.

The alarm was given, and Frank, with the neighbours, went up to the chamber. Though the room was nearly full, not a sound was heard. The stillness seemed to spread from Paul and

the dead, like a spirit, over all them. Frank and some others came near him, and stood before him ; but he continued looking on his wife, as he sat with his crossed hands resting on his thigh ; while the one which had done the murder, still held the bloody knife.

No one moved. At last they looked at each other, and one of them took Paul by the wrist. He turned his slow, heavy eye on them, as if asking who they were, and what had happened. They instinctively shrunk back, letting go their hold, and his arm fell like a dead man's.

There was a movement near the door ; and presently Abel stood directly before Paul, his hands drawn between his knees, his body distorted and seeming to writhe with pain, the muscles of his face hard and twisted, and his features pinched, cold, and blue. There was a gleam and glitter, and something of a laugh, and anguish, too, in his crazed eye, as it flitted back and forth from Esther to Paul. At last Paul glanced upon him. At the sight of Abel he gave a shuddering start that shook the room. He looked once more on his wife ; his hair rose up, and eyes became wild.—“ Esther ! ” he gasped out, tossing up his arms as he threw himself

forward. He struck the bed, and fell to the floor. Abel looked, and saw his face black with the rush of blood to the head. He gave a leap that made him nearly touch the ceiling; and with a deafening, sharp shriek that rung through the house, darted out of the room, and at one spring reached the outer door.

They felt of Paul.—Life had left him.

Frank took the Father from the room. Preparations were hastily made; and about the close of day, Esther's body, followed by a few neighbours and friends, was carried to the grave. The grave-yard was not far from the foot of the stony ridge. As they drew near it, the sun was just going down, and the sky clear, and of a bright, warm glow. Presently a figure was seen running and darting in crossing movements along the top of the ridge, leaping from point to point, more like a creature of the air than of earth, for it hardly seemed to touch on any thing. It was mad Abel. So swift and shooting were his motions, and so quickly did he leap and dance to and fro, that it appeared to the dazzled eye as if hundreds of fiends were holding their hellish revels in the air. And now and then a wild laugh reached the mourners that seemed to



come out from the still sky. When it was night, the men who had made Paul's grave a little without the consecrated ground, came to the house, and taking up the body, moved off towards the place in which they were to lay it.—No bell tolled for the departed; no one followed to mourn over him as he was laid in the ground away from man, or to hear the earth fall on his coffin—that sound which makes us feel as if our living bodies were turning into dust.

It had been a chilly night; and while the frost was yet heavy on the grass, some of the neighbours went to wonder and moralize over Paul's grave. There appeared something singular upon it. They ventured timidly on, and found lying across it, poor Abel. He was apparently dead; and some of the boldest took hold of him. He opened his eyes a little, and uttered a faint, weak cry. They dropped their hold; his limbs quivered and stretched out rigid—then relaxed. His breath came once broken and quick—it was his last.

## THE WEST WIND.

BENEATH the forest skirts I rest,  
Whose branching pines rise dark and high,  
And hear the breezes of the West  
Among the threaded foliage sigh.

Sweet Zephyr ! why that sound of woe ?  
Is not thy home among the flowers ?  
Do not the bright June roses blow,  
To meet thy kiss at morning hours ?

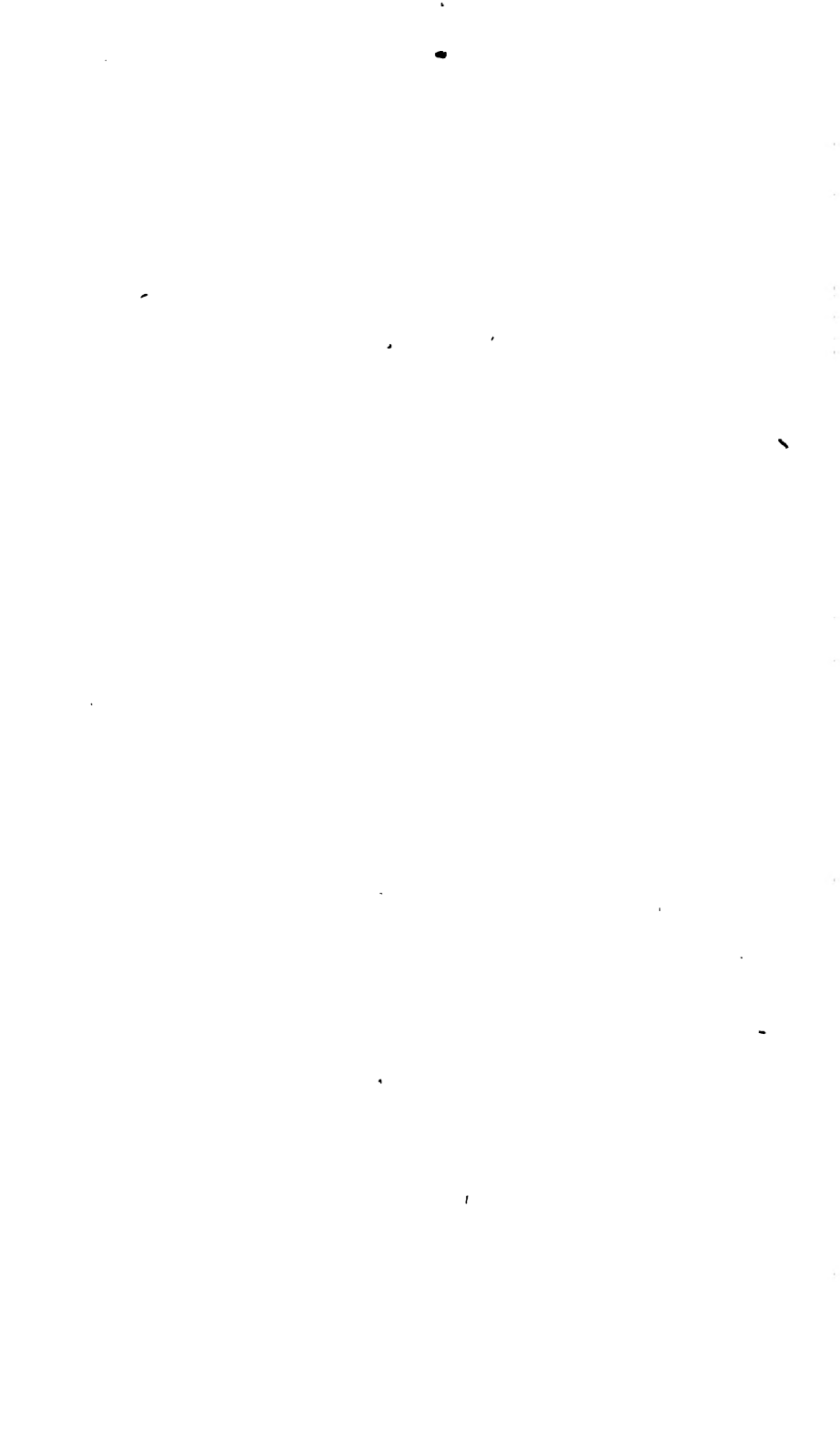
And lo, thy glorious realm outspread !  
Yon stretching valleys green and gay,  
And yon free hill-tops, o'er whose head  
The loose white clouds are borne away.

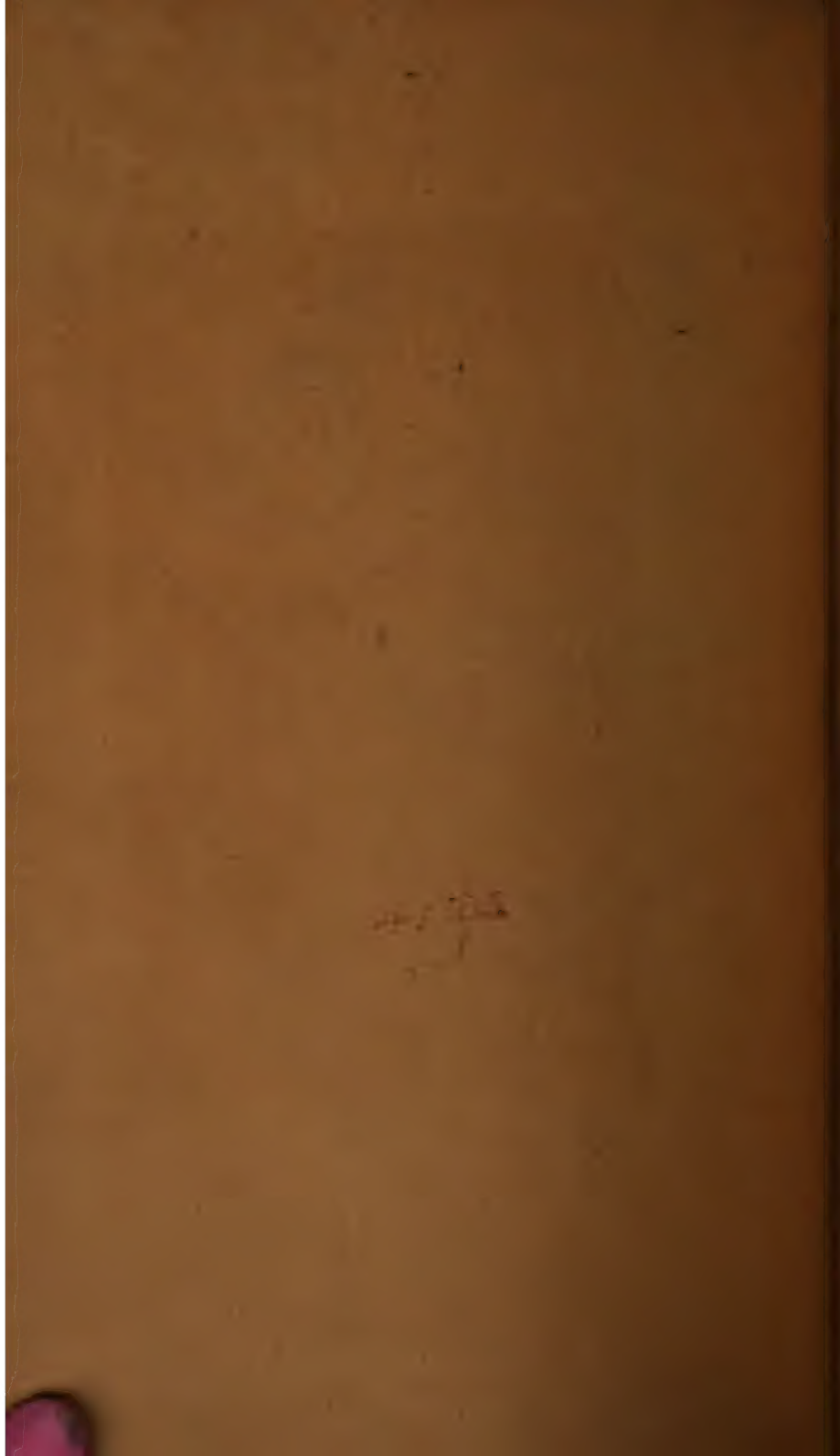
And there the full broad river runs,  
And many a fount, wells fresh and sweet,  
To cool thee, when the mid-day suns  
Have made thee faint beneath their heat.

Thou wind of joy and youth and love !  
Spirit of the new awakened year ;  
The sun, in his blue realm above,  
Smooths a bright path when thou art here.

In lawns the murmuring bee is heard,  
The wooing ringdove in the shade ;  
On thy soft breath the new-fledged bird  
Takes wing, half happy, half afraid.

Ah, thou art like our wayward race ;—  
When not a shade of pain or ill  
Dims the bright smiles of nature's face,  
Thou lov'st to sigh and murmur still.





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